

U.S. jet missing over Sea of Japan

WASHINGTON (R) — A U.S. Air Force U-2 reconnaissance jet was missing and presumed lost with its pilot on Wednesday off the coast of South Korea but there was no evidence of hostile action against the aircraft, the Defense Department said. The Pentagon said radio communications and radar contact were lost at 5:30 a.m. (1030 GMT) with the unarmed jet, similar to high-flying aircraft used by the U.S. military for spying missions. Officials refused to say whether the aircraft was flying on North Korea, but said there was no indication of hostile action against the U-2. "There is no evidence that the aircraft was lost due to hostile action," said Air Force Captain Susan Stredanovsky, a Defense Department spokeswoman. She said the aircraft had taken off from Osan air base south of Seoul, the South Korean capital. The Pentagon said in a brief statement that the U-2 was conducting a routine mission in South Korean air space with the "knowledge and approval" of the Seoul government.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
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Iraq's Kurds to suspend autonomy talks

KHALIFAN, Iraq (R) — Iraq's Kurds said on Wednesday they would suspend peace and autonomy negotiations with the government and hold elections to choose an undisputed leader of their rebel movement. The Kurdistan Front said the elections, in which rivals Massoud Barzani and Jalal Talabani are expected to stand against one another, would take place no later than April 3. Elections for a Kurdish national assembly would be held at the same time, a spokesman added. The front, an umbrella grouping of eight Kurdish political parties, said it would notify the Iraqi government formally that it had suspended negotiations until Baghdad lifted an 11-week-old economic and administrative blockade. The front, its parties backed by guerrilla armies, functions as a de facto government in rebel-held areas of northern Iraq. Mr. Barzani and Mr. Talabani head the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the two largest parties in the front. The front's decisions ended months of drift and division by the leaders of Iraq's rebel Kurds. The decision to break off autonomy negotiations signals a new unity within the Kurdish leadership.

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Israeli coalition closer to collapse

TEL AVIV (AP) — The far-right Tehiya Party announced Wednesday it would withdraw support from Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, bringing closer a collapse of the government and a possible end to Mideast peace talks.

Tehiya leader Yuval Neeman said on Israeli Television that the party was leaving Mr. Shamir's coalition over the issue of Palestinians being offered limited autonomy at Mideast negotiations in Washington.

"We are leaving the government in order to prevent the autonomy which is, from the beginning, actually a Palestinian state," Mr. Neeman said.

He added that the party would officially withdraw on Sunday. The move would leave Mr. Shamir with 61 supporters in the 120-member parliament, but another rightist party is also threatening to quit.

The departure of the Molechet party would mean Mr. Shamir would have only 59 backers, and Molechet leader Rehavam Zeevi said he would recommend quitting at a party meeting Thursday. Molechet has two seats.

Mr. Neeman said Tehiya, which has three members in parliament, would reconsider the move "if the prime minister says that he is stopping the negotiations" in Washington.

Tehiya and Molechet had threatened to pull out if the Washington talks appeared to be leading to autonomy or returning any of the West Bank or Gaza Strip.

While the government offered limited autonomy to the Palestinians in its 1989 initiative, the right-wing has argued that self-rule would lead to eventual ceding of the territories and a Palestinian state.

Mr. Zeevi said on television that he would recommend to his party "to stand by the decision that we are leaving the government." The Knesset (parliament) will have to go to early elections.

The collapse of the government likely would lead to an end to the peace talks. A caretaker government could keep the talks going, but it would have no real mandate to make decisions.

On Wednesday, Shamir spokesman Yossi Alhineir said the prime minister would turn down an offer by left-wing parties to support him if the peace talks were continued.

Both government and opposition figures have said they expect the collapse of the government would lead to elections in June. The balloting is now scheduled for Nov. 3.

Foreign Minister David Levy told reporters on Wednesday that Israel had to offer the 1.7 million Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip some form of limited autonomy at the talks in Washington.

"We have to stick to our basic platform, which includes autonomy, because without that there will be nothing to talk about," he said at an airport news conference after returning from Lisbon, Portugal.

Mr. Levy warned that collapse of the U.S.-brokered talks could throw the issue of the occupied lands back to the United Nations, where Israel feels it is at a disadvantage compared with Arab nations. The Arab countries traditionally have had strong Third World backing in the international forum.

The political announcements came after Mr. Neeman and Mr. Zeevi met in the afternoon with Mr. Shamir, who reportedly pleaded that their withdrawal from the government would lessen the likelihood that Israel would get \$10 billion in requested U.S. loan guarantees.

Mr. Shamir has been put in the position of satisfying his right-wing backers while at the same time keeping in the United States good graces by continuing the U.S.-sponsored peace talks.

As leverage to start the peace

(Continued on page 5)

Peace talks founder over Israeli stand

Third round headed for premature end after Israeli refusal to touch substantive matters, insistence on leaving Washington

From George Hawatmeh in Washington and agency dispatches

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Jordanians shudder at memories of Gulf war, look askance at U.S.

By Serene Halasa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — As the world marks the first anniversary of the start of the Gulf war, the situation on the ground in the Middle East remains unchanged following the destruction of one of the strongest Arab countries. Echoing an apprehension repeated often since the end of the war, Jordanians are still fearful of further American intervention in the region to accomplish what they view as U.S. objectives to exploit the region's resources.

Vivid memories of television footage of bombs and high-tech rockets on Iraq remain fresh among Jordanians.

People interviewed by the Jordan Times on the eve of the first anniversary of the Gulf war expressed their anger and dismay at the ferocity of the drive against Iraq.

"The first thing that comes to my mind is the amount of violence and expression of hatred which was disproportionate and unwarranted for the liberation (of Kuwait)," said Iyad Kattan, director of the Royal Cultural Centre.

Rami Khouri, a former editor-in-chief of the Jordan Times and a renowned columnist, described the war that was waged on Iraq as a "technological barbarism of the

American government."

Abdullah Khatib, executive president of the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS), said that he could not have dreamt of a war of such ferocity that it was.

"The savagery of the bombing has not been like it in history," Dr. Khatib said. "The suffering of the Iraqis and Arabs make me feel distressed. This scar will not heal for three generations to come."

Remembering the scenes of the war, Taher Hikmat, a prominent lawyer and former minister, said it was like "an awful dream."

Mr. Hikmat blamed the media, especially the American media, for totally overlooking the human dimension of the conflict and highlighting the war's technical aspect.

"When I remember last year I try to look (at it) through the message of the media," he said. "There was a lot of misinformation, exaggeration and misleading reports."

There was a general consensus among Jordanians that the continuation of sanctions against Iraq, a nation that had the equivalent of 10 Hiroshima bombs dropped on it in the 42-day war, is meaningless and only aggravates the suffering of the people. They also acknowledge that the sanctions are

mainly political, aiming at ousting the Iraqi leadership.

"Maintaining the sanctions is meaningless and is done to humiliate Iraq and the Arab Nation," Mr. Kattan said.

Ousting the Iraqi leadership "was not the general objective of the war, and that was repeated many times by the American administration," Mr. Kattan said. "By maintaining the sanctions against Iraq" the Americans are contradicting themselves. They are not the Security Council and the sanctions should never be linked to overthrowing a political regime."

"The (Iraqi) regime won't suffer from the sanctions, but the people will," Dr. Khatib said. He added that everybody should bear the responsibility of the suffering of the Iraqi people as a result of the sanctions.

"I am against sanctions that are aimed against the people," Mr. Hikmat said. "If the international community thinks that something should be done then it should be done without destroying people."

Taking it one step further, Mr. Khouri said the military option liberated Kuwait but failed to deal with other problems in the region; on the contrary, it has created new ones such as the Kurdish problem in northern Iraq, the enor-



More than a month into the Gulf war that began Jan. 17, 1991, Baghdad residents go about their business against a backdrop of wrecked bridges and bombed-out buildings (File photo)

According to Mr. Khouri, the new world order is a "grave but futile attempt by (U.S. President George) Bush." He said that few people are "hating the American claim of a new world order."

Mr. Khouri said he believes that democracy and pluralism are the key to the future of the Middle East and the only means to protect and provide basic human rights, stability and dignity for all.

Dr. Abdul Rahim Malhas, a general surgeon and a liberal columnist, said the American quest for a new world order was creating a "new world disorder."

"The United States was

more balanced when another power (the Soviet Union) kept it in check," he explained. "I have doubts about the Americans assuming responsibility for everything going on in the world. They are going to need another power to help them and probably Japan or the European Community would be that (future) power."

Mr. Hikmat also expressed doubt that the U.S. would dominate in the future and said: "The future is not gloomy. We will pass through a prolonged age of uncertainty, of U.S. dominance or the emergence of another power such as Japan or the European Community."

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Bush says Iraq still has many ballistic missiles

WASHINGTON (AP) — President George Bush said Tuesday that Iraq has "large numbers of undeclared ballistic missiles" and may still be trying to produce copies of the Scud missile that it bought before the Gulf war.

In a report to Congress, Mr. Bush said that documents found in Iraq and inspections conducted after the war confirm that Iraq was trying to build nuclear weapons.

"These documents and facilities reveal a well-funded and broadly based nuclear weapons development programme involving sophisticated facilities," the president said. He said further investigation was required.

The president's report was released two days before the first anniversary of the start of the U.S.-led war against Iraq. The report was intended to keep Congress informed of efforts to win Iraq's compliance with resolutions adopted by the U.N. Security Council.

At the same time, U.S. Representative Lee Hamilton, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Middle East Sub-committee, said the United Nations should use force if needed to deliver relief supplies to suffering Iraqi citizens allegedly being deprived of aid by the government.

"I personally would support a U.N. resolution" calling for the use of "any steps necessary" to deliver the aid, Mr. Hamilton said on the Public Broadcasting Service programme American Interests, taped for airing this weekend.

Mr. Hamilton said the Gulf war had failed to achieve many of the goals the United States had for it. Iran has retained standing as a regional power. Arab states have failed to force their own regional security regime, and Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have failed to make democratic reforms, he said.

Mr. Bush said that inspection teams, created under a Security Council resolution, have supervised the destruction of 62 ballistic missiles, 18 fixed missile launch pads, 33 ballistic missile warheads and 127 missile storage support racks.

He said they also destroyed large amounts of rocket fuel, an assembled 350-mm supergun, components of two 350-mm superguns and two 1,000-mm superguns, and one tonne of supergun propellant.

"The United States believes, however, that Iraq continues to possess large numbers of undeclared ballistic missiles," the president reported.

"Questions also remain about whether all aspects of Iraq's attempts to produce the Scud missile indigenously and to develop a more capable solid propellant missile have been discovered," Mr. Bush said.

Iraq acknowledged for the first time that it had built a large uranium-enrichment system suitable for producing nuclear bombs, a senior U.N. inspector said in Bahrain after returning from an inspection trip to Iraq.

"The significance of this... is that Iraq acknowledged it has been pursuing a production-scale centrifuge enrichment programme rather than simply a research programme," said the official, Robert Gallucci.

Mr. Bush said that the U.N. special commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency were continuing inspections in Iraq.

"Iraq has not impeded these efforts insofar as they concern sites and activities declared by Iraq and Iraq's participation in the destruction of identified chemical weapons," Mr. Bush said.

"In the main, however, Iraq continues to be uncooperative and obstructive with respect to inspection of sites identified by

the special commission and the IAEA (based on their own sources of information) as potentially involving clandestine, proscribed activities," the president said.

"Iraqi war dead less than 10,000"

Fewer than 10,000 Iraqi soldiers were killed or wounded in the Gulf war, the general in charge of the air campaign said Tuesday. The figure was lower than earlier estimates by the U.S. military.

But the casualty estimated by air force General Charles Horner, made in an interview with Cable News Network, is the only figure a top Pentagon official has ever provided.

The Defence Intelligence Agency said after the war that about 100,000 Iraqis had been killed and 300,000 wounded during the conflict.

But the agency said that so "little information is available... to make an accurate estimate" that the figures have an error factor of 50 per cent or more.

The Iraqis "may have had 10,000, 20,000, maybe 30,000 casualties," Gen. Horner said.

"That's a lot of casualties," he said. "But it's not nearly the number that some people are touting of 100,000 or 200,000... I just don't believe that. And I think the eyewitness accounts on the battlefield support probably less than 10,000 casualties."

Gen. Horner estimated that, on the eve of the war, there were 400,000 Iraqi troops. Desertions, he said, may have brought that down to 200,000 during the war. The allied coalition took 87,000 prisoners.

That and other factors led Gen. Horner to his conclusion.

"We didn't find any mass graves," he said. "We didn't find any large numbers of people dead from attacks."

U.S. officials say Iran has bases in Sudan

WASHINGTON (AP) — Iran, trying to expand its influence beyond the Middle East, has established bases in Sudan to train fundamentalist Muslim guerrillas, Israeli and U.S. officials say.

The United States and its allies in the Middle East are worried about this latest evidence of the growing friendship between the two Muslim states.

"It's enough that we have to worry about them (Iran) trying to control the Gulf region, with a foothold in Africa, they're also getting closer to Europe," said one American official.

In return for access to Sudan, Iran is providing its government with military training against an eight-year-old insurgency by rebels who are mostly Christians and animists, said the officials, who spoke only on condition of anonymity.

In recent months Iran has been setting up facilities in Sudan for Muslim radicals from Arab countries whose governments are considered pro-Western — including some Gulf states and Algeria, said the official.

The Iranians are also providing training for two factions of Islamic Jihad and for Hizbollah, both Iranian-backed organisations which held Western hostages in Lebanon, said a senior Israeli official. He spoke on condition of anonymity.

The Iranians are helping "anyone willing to fight the enemies of Allah," he said.

Iran has been sponsoring such groups in Lebanon and in Europe, earning itself a place on a U.S. list of countries that support terrorism.

The American official suggested Iran was reducing its guerrilla training in Eastern Lebanon at the request of Syria

Arens says Gulf war ended too soon

TEL AVIV (R) — Defence Minister Moshe Arens, still smarting from Israel's failure to retaliate for Iraqi missile attacks, said Wednesday that Washington halted the Gulf war a week too early.

"If the war had continued another week, Israel would have acted," Mr. Arens told Israel Radio two days before the first anniversary of the conflict.

"And if you ask me if I am sorry the war ended a week too early," the headline defence minister said, "yes, I am sorry on all counts."

U.S. President George Bush, seeing U.S.-led forces achieve an overwhelming victory, called off the land war that followed a month of aerial attacks after a 100-hour offensive.

Although the onslaught by the U.S.-led allied forces crushed an army once estimated to number one million men and destroyed much of Iraq's military equipment, the early ceasefire is controversial because it left Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in power.

"His ability to survive is much greater than anyone thought," Mr. Arens said.

Mr. Arens conceded the U.S. offensive had destroyed much of Iraq's ability to wage war — it lost most of its tanks and artillery — but said there was still a small possibility Iraq could fire missiles at Israel.

However, Mr. Arens, a leading contender to succeed Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir eventually, focused on continuing anger at U.S. pressure for Israel not to retaliate when Iraq began lobbing Scud missiles at its cities.

Although Iraq fired at least 39 missiles at Israel, mainly against the largest city Tel Aviv, Washington opposed Israeli retaliation in case it split the anti-Iraq coalition of Arab forces it had assembled.

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Scholar sues over publication of Dead Sea scrolls in U.S.

TEL AVIV (AP) — An Israeli scholar filed a lawsuit Tuesday charging that years of his work have been undercut by unauthorised publication in the United States of Dead Sea scrolls texts.

The case was filed in a Jerusalem court by Elisha Qimron, a linguistics professor at Ben Gurion University.

The suit is the latest salvo in a controversy over the scrolls, which have been a major source of Biblical scholarship since their discovery in the late 1940s.

The scrolls, found in caves near the Dead Sea, contain the oldest known texts of the Old Testament, documents relating to the Essene civilisation that collected the documents, as well as literature and poetry.

Teams of scholars have been working on them for years, partly under Israeli government supervision, and have published their findings periodically through Britain's Oxford University Press.

American scholars have charged that publication has been too slow and that they have been denied access to important Biblical and historic material.

In recent months, an American university has made microfilm copies of the scrolls available to scholars, while a "bootleg" version reconstructed by computer and a "facsimile edition" of photographic plates have been published.

Mr. Qimron told the Associated Press that he had been working on transcription of a Dead Sea scrolls letter for 11 years.

"It was composed from 70 little fragments that were hardly readable," he said. "I worked very hard. They took it and published it in their name."

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MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Djibouti names new health minister

NAIROBI (R) — Djibouti's President Hassan Gouled Aptidon named a new health minister Wednesday to replace one who resigned in protest over his handling of a rebellion by Afar tribesmen in the north of the Red Sea republic. Djibouti Radio, said Hassan Gouled had appointed Idris Harbi Farah as the new minister for health. Former Minister Mohammad Djama Elabe, a moderate member of the ruling Issa clan, resigned Tuesday saying "the fight for democracy is determined at the political level and not by arms. The logic of war seems for the present and future to prevail over a political choice." Government troops have been trying to staunch a campaign by guerrillas of the Afar-led front for the Restoration of Democracy (FRUD) to loosen the grip on power of the Somali-speaking Issas. The radio added that government forces on Tuesday repulsed an attack by what it described as "armed terrorists" on a military barracks at Daoudia in the centre of the country. "The army defended the barracks effectively and repulsed the attackers inflicting heavy losses on them," the radio said quoting a high command statement. It gave no other details. The tiny Horn of Africa state has a population of some half-million, fairly evenly divided between the two ethnic communities but the Issas dominate the government. Sandwiched between Ethiopia and Somalia, the former French colony has so far avoided the conflicts that scar those nations.

Israel 'preparing to open ties with Angola'

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's foreign ministry said Tuesday that the Jewish state was preparing to open diplomatic relations with Angola. "Israel will soon prepare diplomatic relations with Angola," a ministry statement said. It said the move was agreed to in a meeting in Lisbon on Tuesday between Foreign Minister David Levy and Angolan Foreign Minister Pedro de Castro van Dunem. The statement said Mr. Levy had invited the Angolan foreign minister to Israel to prepare the diplomatic ties. The visit was expected within the next few months, it said. Mr. Levy also held talks with Cape Verde Islands Foreign Minister Jorge Fonseca aimed at establishing diplomatic relations but there was no immediate agreement, Cape Verdean Ambassador Eusebio Innocencio said in Lisbon Tuesday. It was agreed a mission from that West African country would visit Israel in late February to discuss the issue and possible Israeli aid for the drought-stricken former Portuguese colony. Mr. Levy arrived in Lisbon on Sunday night for talks with Portuguese leaders, centring on Portugal's current role as president of the European Community. The foreign ministry said Mr. Levy was to return to Israel on Wednesday evening.

Swiss court refuses to free Iranian

BERNE (R) — Switzerland's supreme court has refused to free an arrested Iranian wanted by France on suspicion of complicity in the murder of former Iranian Prime Minister Shapur Bakhtiar, the justice ministry said Tuesday. The court considered there was a danger that the Iranian, Zeyar Sarhadi, might flee if he was released while the justice ministry decided on a French request for his extradition. Swiss police arrested Sarhadi on Dec. 23 on an Interpol warrant initiated in Paris. French police said they believed he helped prepare the attack on Mr. Bakhtiar, who was stabbed to death in Paris last Aug. 6, and assisted the killers to flee. Mr. Bakhtiar was Iran's last prime minister under the late Shah, ousted in an Islamic revolution in 1979. Sarhadi's arrest set off a diplomatic row between Switzerland and Iran.

Anti-Khomeini writer shot dead in Beirut

BEIRUT (R) — A Lebanese writer critical of Iran's late leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini was shot dead by a gunman in Beirut on Wednesday, security sources said. Mustapha Geha, a Shiite Muslim, was shot while driving in the Sabtiyeh district during the morning rush hour, they said. The gunman escaped. Geha, in his 50s, wrote several books attacking Khomeini and his 1979 Islamic revolution.

Turkey seizes heroin bound for Italy

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkish police seized 30 kilograms of heroin bound for Italy Wednesday and detained four people, the semi-official Anatolian news agency reported. The drugs, seized in Istanbul, were found inside the petrol tank of a truck bound for Milan, it said. Turkey is on the so-called Balkan route, which smugglers use to ship drugs from Afghanistan to Western Europe via Pakistan and Iran.

Turkish foreign minister to visit Russia

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's foreign minister will visit Russia on Jan. 20-21, for the first high-level contact between the two countries since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, a senior official said Wednesday. "This will be a very constructive and positive visit that shows the importance Turkey attaches to ties with the Russian Federation," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Filiz Dincen said. Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin had been invited by Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, she added. "Various topics in their bilateral and international aspects will be discussed between Cetin and Kozyrev. We naturally want the talks to have as wide a context as possible," she said. It was not known whether Mr. Cetin would meet Russian President Boris Yeltsin. Turkey is keen to maintain close relations with the Russian Federation. Turkish firms are engaged in construction projects worth about \$2 billion in locations mainly in Russia.

Guerrillas attack Israeli allies

MARJAYOUN, Lebanon (R) — Guerrillas attacked a post of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) in South Lebanon overnight, security sources said Wednesday. They said the attackers fired a rocket-propelled grenade and bursts of machinegun fire into the SLA position near the village of Marjayoun, three kilometres northwest of the Israeli border. SLA sources said the militia suffered no casualties. About 1,000 Israeli soldiers back the 3,000-strong SLA in controlling a 15 kilometres wide buffer enclave in South Lebanon.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO
18:00 Documentary
18:30 Magpy
19:15 News in French
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 The Simpsons
21:10 NBA Basketball
22:00 News in English
22:20 Feature film: "Where Pigeons Go To Die"

PRAYER TIMES

05:10 Fajr
06:32 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:42 Dhuhr
14:28 Asr
16:52 Maghrib
18:14 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swatish Tel: 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Sella Church Tel. 661757

Terrace Church Tel: 623366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 623583, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 627981, 685326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824 and 654932
Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691

WEATHER

It will be partly cloudy to cloudy and rainy at times. Winds will be westerly moderate to fresh. In Aqaba, it will be partly cloudy with northerly moderate winds and calm seas.
Min./max. temp.
Amman 7 / 18
Aqaba 7 / 18
Deserts 3 / 12
Jordan Valley 11 / 18
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 9, Aqaba 17. Humidity readings:

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN 95 per cent, Aqaba 50 per cent.
NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Hussein Haddad 731267
Dr. Fakher Bibbezi 625778
Dr. Hanna Mansour 748364
Dr. Adnan Zaghoul 898140
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 670531
Al Asana pharmacy 636730
Nairokh pharmacy 636732
Al Salam pharmacy 646945
Yacoub pharmacy 637660
Smelebi pharmacy 637660
JERUSALEM:
Dr. Abdul Hameed Gharaibeh (—)
Al Shamsa pharmacy (985238)
ZARQA:
Dr. Yahya Al Tarifi (—)

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 943402
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 943402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Repairs 661101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 773111
Jordan Television 774111
Radio Jordan 774111

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khaldi Maternity, J. Amn. 642816
Akilch Maternity, J. Amn. 642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsiuni 641714
Shamsiuni Hospital 609131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musaber Hospital 6672279
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/57
Al-Ahli, Abdali 661646
Italian, Al-Mulajress 771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775112/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (02)5220-5, where it should always be verified.
ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
8:15 Sweas (RJ)
9:15 Riyadh (RJ)
9:30 Aqaba (RJ)
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Rus Sam Hospital (09)966732
Al Hilam Modern Hospital (09)90990
IBRD:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272775
Rus Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

13:45 Bahrain, Abu Dhabi (GF)
14:00 Tripoli (LV)
14:50 Cairo (MS)
21:30 Damascus, Istanbul (PK)

Other Flights (Terminal 1)

06:15 Beirut (RJ)
07:00 Aqaba (RJ)
08:55 Rome (RJ)
11:30 Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
12:00 Paris (RJ)
12:30 London (RJ)
13:30 Larnaca (RJ)
15:45 Cairo (RJ)
21:00 Abu Dhabi (GF)
21:40 Jeddah (GF)
21:40 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
22:00 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)
21:30 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.
Apple (red) 700 / 700
Apple (yellow) 500 / 500
Bananas 500 / 450
Bananas (medium) 520 / 500
Beans 200 / 150
Cabbage 170 / 120
Carrot 220 / 160
Cauliflower 200 / 200
Cucumbers (large) 250 / 200
Cucumbers (small) 600 / 500
Eggplant 200 / 150
Garlic 500 / 500
Grapefruit 180 / 120
Lemon 180 / 120
Marrow (large) 200 / 150
Marrow (small) 350 / 300
Onion (dry) 180 / 120
Onion (green) 180 / 120
Oranges 420 / 250
Pepper (red) 600 / 500
Pepper (green) 400 / 400
Potato 340 / 300
Radish 120 / 80
Sage 600 / 500
Squash 200 / 150
Tomato 420 / 300

Concerned mothers don truckers' hats to help children of Iraq

By Serene Halasa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — To protest the ongoing sanctions imposed against Iraq, a group of concerned mothers driving trucks loaded with 10 tonnes of milk, vitamins and antibiotics left Amman for Baghdad Wednesday.

The emergency campaign, sponsored by an American Organisation for Women and Children (MADRE) (Spanish for mother) in coordination with the General Federation of Jordanian Women, the General Federation of Palestinian Women, the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) and the Jordan Red Crescent Society, is timed to coincide with the first anniversary of the start of the Gulf war.

Addressing a press conference held at the Jordan Red Crescent Society prior to the departure of the convoy, Dr. Mohammad Haddad, president of the society, said the campaign was organised to "express our solidarity with the women and children of Iraq."

"Iraq used to be a donor country, now it is receiving aid from outside," Dr. Haddad said. "All the help the Red Crescent and other non-governmental organisations have so far provided to Iraq is a mere drop in the bucket. That is why the sanctions should be lifted."

President of the Federation of Jordanian Women Dr. Haifa Abu Ghazaleh thanked MADRE for

their effort and hoped that the campaign would help alleviate some of the suffering of the women and children of Iraq.

Vivian Stromberg, executive director of MADRE and one of its founding members, said the war was engineered by American politicians.

"We will not alleviate the suffering of the people of Iraq if sanctions are not lifted," Ms. Stromberg said. "Iraqi children are not enemies and women understand that."

An active member in peace and justice movements for the past 30 years, Ms. Stromberg stressed that political problems should never be solved at the expense of women, children and families.

"It is not acceptable to starve children," she said. "I hope the next time we go to Iraq we will hear children laughing, not crying."

Ms. Stromberg said that MADRE raised contributions from "generous people in all the corners of the United States." She stressed that the contributions complied with the norms of international law and Resolution 661, which excludes food and medicine from the embargo.

"We got a clearance from the Treasury Department allowing us to get food and medicine to Iraq," Ms. Stromberg said.

Another member of the team, Faye Williams, is a staff counsel and special assistant to U.S. Congressman Mervyn Dymally and

an advocate of civil rights. She was on board the peace ship that sailed from Algeria to Iraq one year ago but was stopped by allied forces.

Ms. Williams said that keeping silent on the sanctions against the people of Iraq "is a crime against humanity. Until the sanctions are lifted, the war continues," she said.

Dr. Helen Rodriguez, a pediatrician and member of MADRE, said she was proud of working for a humanitarian cause. Dr. Rodriguez cited statistics compiled from the work of the International Commission of Public Health that visited Iraq last October and did extensive research on the effect of the war and the sanctions on civilians.

"According to the study team, Iraq's child mortality tripled after the war and 100,000 children have so far died," Dr. Rodriguez said. "More than 900,000 children under the age of five are malnourished and around 29 per cent are considered significantly malnourished."

Maya Miller, a MADRE member from Nevada, said she hoped that their mission to Iraq would "make a huffer of peace in the future." The women, 25 in all, are also carrying blankets and sweaters contributed by the Jordanian organisers as well as letters of peace and good wishes from American children to the children of Iraq.



As part of Arbor Day celebrations, His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday lends a hand in planting a tree sapling (Petra photo)

On Arbor Day, King calls on citizens to help green Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein, Her Majesty Queen Noor and other members of the Royal family Wednesday took part in Arbor Day celebrations by planting several trees at the main celebration site in Yajouz.

"This country and this land will remain green with God's will in the present and in the future," King Hussein said in a statement to the press at the celebration site.

The celebration took place on the grounds of the Royal Police Academy, about eight kilometres northwest of Amman. The King urged Jordanian citizens to contribute to greening the country which, he said, expressing hope that Jordanians will be able to turn their country into a green paradise by the end of the present century.

The King voiced optimism that the new year will bring blessings to the Kingdom and said that with God's will and determination Jordan will be turned green by the year 2000.

Princes Hamzeh and Hashem, the King's sons, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Ahmad Lawzi, Chief of the Royal Court Adnan Abu Odeh, Chief Chamberlain Prince Raad Ben Zeid, Cabinet members, deputies and other dignitaries took part in the tree-planting celebration. Also present to plant trees, were representatives of the diplomatic missions in Jordan.

A second tree-planting ceremony was held at the Marj Al Hamam, a town west of Amman, under Royal patronage with King Hussein taking part in planting trees with the local inhabitants. Present with the King were the prime minister, Cabinet members and a large number of citizens, all taking part in the tree-planting celebration.

King Hussein attended a third ceremony at the village of Turki within the Naqur District, where he planted trees along with the local inhabitants.

According to a spokesman for

the Ministry of Agriculture, which organised the celebrations, a total of 20,000 tree saplings were planted Wednesday at the three sites, but many other thousands were planted in the other governorates of the Kingdom.

The ministry had said that it had produced millions of tree saplings which were being distributed free of charge to individuals, organisations, schools, companies and the armed forces in a bid to prevent soil erosion and stem desertification.

The Jordanian Armed Forces also celebrated Arbor Day, with the main ceremony held by at the grounds of the headquarters of the Military Sports Federation.

Attending the ceremony and taking part in tree-planting ceremonies was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Field Marshal Farbi Abu Taleh. Other senior army officers planted forest and fruit trees, including olive saplings, at the same site.

Jordan, Sudan sign \$70 million trade agreement

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan and Sudan Thursday signed an agreement which will pave the way for trade exchanges totalling about \$70 million a year.

An announcement said that under the agreement, 144 types of Jordanian national products will be available for sale to Sudan while Jordan will be offered a list of 43 types of Sudanese products from which to choose.

The agreement, to be signed by the Jordanian Commercial Centres Corporation (JCCC) and the Sudanese Koptrade Company, provides for each side to sell \$35 million worth of national products, according to the announcement.

peanuts, pure honey, karkadeh and bandicrafts. Sudanese embassy sources said that the agreement will provide for national products to be bartered. The sources said Sudan will be importing medicines, electric appliances, water pipes, clothes and furniture among other products. They said Sudan will sell Jordan meat and sugar.

The exhibition was organised in observation of the 36th anniversary of the independence of Sudan to promote the sale of Sudanese products in Jordanian markets. In return, Jordan plans a trade exhibition in Khartoum before the end of June 1992 to promote the sale of Jordanian goods in Sudan.

The exhibition was attended by Sudanese Minister of Immigration Saeed Al Mahjoub, who held talks with Minister of Industry and Trade Abdullah Ensour to discuss trade, and toured a number of Jordanian industrial installations.

Want to see Petra? How about using a hot air balloon

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — For the first time in Jordan and probably in the whole Arab region, hot air balloons will be used to promote tourism to archaeological sites in southern Jordan, with the experimental trip to begin this coming Friday.

If plans go well, the balloons will be expected to transport tourists from Jordan and abroad to such ancient and archaeological sites like the Nabatean city of Petra, Wadi Rumm, Karak, Wadi Al Mujib and Sboab, all in the southern regions of the Kingdom, according to an official statement by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Wednesday.

Petra said that the local tourist and travel agency International Traders, in conjunction with the Ministry of Tourism and Royal Jordanian (RJ), the national airline, are sponsoring the project, which is expected

to be popular in the Kingdom. The announcement said that Friday will be the date for the first official experimental trip to these sites aboard the balloon, going first to Wadi Rumm. The balloon will be flown to Petra on Jan. 20 through Jan. 25, while trips will commence to Wadi Al Mujib and Karak on Jan. 26 and continue through Jan. 28, the announcement noted.

The announcement said that all the requirements for the trip's success will be made available as the ministry plans to conduct regular and organised trips to these sites as of September.

According to Ministry of Tourism Secretary General Nasri Atallah, organisers of the balloon programme have been running trial tests for the past year to select the most appropriate areas for flying the balloons. He told the Jordan Times that the flights will not be expensive.

New Jordan UNRWA director faces growing population, limited budget

By Nidal M. Ibrahim
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Maintaining the same level of services and meeting the needs of a growing refugee population are the main challenges facing the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) Jordan Field Office, its new director has said.

Dennis L. Brown, a graduate of Georgetown University in Washington D.C., has replaced Franke de Jonge, who was named coordinator of operations at UNRWA headquarters in Vienna. He takes over UNRWA's largest field office, serving a refugee population of about one million.

"The main challenge you have is to try to offer a service to a refugee population which is steadily increasing at a time when donations are remaining fairly stagnant," Mr. Brown, who took over as head of the Jordan Field Office Dec. 24, said in an interview with the Jordan Times Monday. "(The challenge is) trying to balance the growing need of a refugee community and the growing needs of a staff of almost 6,000

people against the framework of a very fixed budget which doesn't increase very much each year."

Mr. Brown is not unfamiliar with the Jordan Field Office, having served there as deputy director before leaving in April 1990 to take the same position at UNRWA's Syria Field Office. Before that, he served as field service officer in the Gaza Strip office.

He said he does not expect to make too many changes in the way the Jordan Field Office is operated. "Although you change directors, UNRWA's programmes really don't change," Mr. Brown said. "UNRWA's basically been doing the same programmes for 30-something years. There haven't been many changes. (The programmes) just get larger because our population gets larger."

Still, Mr. Brown stressed that a tightening of the financial belt is in the offing, considering the nonofficial average growth rate of 3.4 per cent of the refugee population in Jordan.

"As with every year, UNRWA's financial bind gets tighter and tighter," he said. "Every director is put under a mandate to try and be as efficient as possible with the limited funds that you can."

Although the UNRWA field office did receive \$1.9 million extra from Germany and \$1 million from Austria to help deal with the returnees, the basic budget remains relatively unchanged. The 1992 projected budget for the Jordan Field Office is about \$60 million, an UNRWA official said.

"There isn't too much additional money which you have so you just try to cope with that," Mr. Brown said. "The agency is in a tight fix this year because we are now expanding to add a 10th year of education, which will commence on the Sept. 1, 1992..."

Despite the obvious challenges confronting him and his office, Mr. Brown expresses confidence in the ability of his staff to continue to help the refugees while at the same time precariously balancing a troubled budget.

"UNRWA likes to think after 41 years of existence that its developed a strong professional staff," he said. "Although directors may change or the deputy director may change, you continue on in the same framework. I don't think there are any real deficiencies in our operations."

AMMAN (J.T.) — A leading Italian peace activist, Ernesto Olivero is due here Thursday on a two-day visit to Jordan.

Mr. Olivero, who heads major charitable organisations in northern Italy, is bringing to Jordan two plane-loads of relief supplies including food, medicines and blankets for the needy in the Kingdom, according to Jordan Caritas Director Father Mousa Adeb.

Mr. Olivero, who last year received the Jordanian Al Kawab Medal from His Majesty

King honours Perez de Cuellar

NEW YORK (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein has conferred on former U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar the Jordanian Al Nahda Medal of the First Order. It was presented to Mr. De Cuellar by Jordan's U.N. Ambassador Abdullah Salah.

The presentation took place at an official luncheon held at the ambassador's residence in New York in honour of Mr. De Cuellar, who ended his tour of duty at the end of 1991 and was succeeded by Boutros Ghali of Egypt.

In a brief address, Mr. Salah voiced King Hussein's deep appreciation of Mr. De Cuellar's services to the United Nations over the past 10 years and praised his support for Jordan's role in the Middle East. Mr. Salah also spoke with gratitude of Mr. De Cuellar's efforts in ensuring continued U.N. assistance to Jordan

during his 10-year mandate. In a reply address, Mr. De Cuellar said he was grateful for the honour, noting that he took pride in his personal friendship with King Hussein during his

mandate in the United Nations. Mr. De Cuellar said he was deeply impressed by the King's wise leadership and personality and had often sought his advice over a number of world issues.

Home News in Brief

Minister receives U.S. ambassador

AMMAN (Petra) — Labour Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabarti received Wednesday U.S. ambassador to Jordan Roger Harrison and discussed with him scopes of cooperation between Jordan and the U.S. The two also discussed prospects of directing American assistance to small and medium-sized projects in Jordan. The meeting was attended by the director of the USAID in Amman.

Libyan official arrives today

AMMAN (Petra) — Libyan Higher Education Minister Ibrahim Abu Khuzam will arrive in Amman today on a six-day visit to Jordan. Mr. Abu Khuzam, who will be accompanied by an educational team, will hold talks with high ranking Jordanian officials on enhancing cooperation between the two countries.

Speaker denies report

AMMAN (Petra) — Lower House of Parliament acting Speaker Abdul Karim Al Dughmi denied Wednesday news reports saying that the House was asked to lift parliamentary immunity from one of the House's members. "The House's speakership did not receive anything on the issue," Mr. Dughmi said. Reports Tuesday said that the Amman Court of First Instance had sent an official memorandum to Justice Minister Youssef Mbsideen requesting him to ask the Lower House to lift immunity from one of its members to enable the court to sue him for giving a JD 16,000 cheque without sufficient funds.

House fails to meet quorum

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament did not have its meeting Wednesday due to lack of quorum. Ground rules of the House stipulate that two thirds of the members should be present at any meeting.

Minister tours health centres

AMMAN (Petra) — Health Minister Aref Batzineh met Wednesday with directors of health centres and hospitals in northern Jordan and briefed them on the ministry's future policies. Dr. Batzineh stressed the need to improve on services in the ministry's hospitals and called for cooperation and integration between hospitals. The minister also emphasised the importance of coordination between health centres and schools. The minister commended the role of ministry's hospitals and health centres during the recent snowstorm and urged the directors to update their emergency plans.

Italian peace activist begins visit to Jordan today

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King Hussein for his humanitarian efforts, has been organising monthly shipment of relief supplies to Jordan over the past year in the wake of the Gulf war, while he has been distributed through the Jordan Caritas centres in the Kingdom, Father Adeb noted.

Mr. Olivero is accompanied on the visit by General Momponi, who represents the Italian government and the armed forces, which are supplying the transport planes to carry the shipments to Amman.

Ministry plans to distribute aid more efficiently

AMMAN (Petra) — Social Development Minister Amin Awad Mashaqbeh has said his ministry would draw up an administrative development plan aimed at activating the role of the ministry's institutions.

Mr. Mashaqbeh said the plan will cover the main social development departments in all governorates and districts.

In an interview Tuesday with

the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Dr. Mashaqbeh said the ministry will update legislation and regulations in force in line with economic and social changes.

The ministry plans to open a number of offices in large residential areas with main concentration on the rural areas, he noted. He added that the ministry will reconsider the criteria under which national aid is granted.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Art exhibition by Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan and Italian ambassador to Jordan Franco de Courtes at Abdul Hameed Shuman Foundation Gallery — 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- ★ Exhibition of the activities of the Goethe Institute in Amman at the institute, Jabal Amman.
- ★ Art exhibition by Shaker Abu Ghazaleh at the Royal Cultural Centre.

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Jordan Times

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Transitional conflicts

THE FUMBLING of democracy in Algeria over growing fears that Muslim fundamentalists would most probably consolidate their election gains during the scheduled January 16 runoff elections must be sending ominous shock waves across the entire Islamic world. What is at stake is the future of embryonic democracy in the Muslim countries which are trying desperately to spring permanent roots for their fledgling democracies in a world increasingly demanding effective democratisation processes in the wake of the new international order launched on the heels of the collapse of the communist order and the ushering in of pluralistic democracy in the former Soviet Union and east European countries.

For Algeria and other Muslim states, the issue has become whether Muslim fundamentalist's version of Islam and Western styled democracy are mutually exclusive. In this vein, the test case for democracy in Algeria has clear implications for Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan, where Muslim fundamentalists have already scored political gains. Elsewhere in the Islamic world, notably in Pakistan, Sudan, Iran and the former Islamic Soviet republics, Islamists are also poised to strengthen their standing.

To be sure, there is nothing inherently irreconcilable between pluralistic democracy and Islam per se. True Islam is a progressive religion that embodies enough safeguards to make it suitable and appropriate for all ages and circumstances. The trouble lies in the fact that "Bab Al Ijtihad," meaning "the door of interpretation," has been shut closed for nearly one thousand years, leaving Islamic guidelines way behind contemporary conditions and events. But until and unless that window of opportunity for evolutionary interpretation of some aspects of Islam is opened up again, there will always be fears that once fundamentalists gain power in any given state pluralistic democracy will fade away, leaving the fundamentalists in a permanent position to exercise and monopolise power to the effective exclusion of all other shades of opinion.

Algeria was poised to illustrate a fine example of expanding democracy not only for the Arab and Islamic countries but also for the rest of the developing world, which has yet to plunge into democracy. The shining example of democracy in Algeria had already won international acclaim, especially within the U.N. system where Algeria has been in the forefront of underdeveloped countries which opted for democracy as an effective way to develop not only economically, but also politically. The link between real economic development and democracy had been amply demonstrated time and again in the world and to the satisfaction of countries like Algeria. In this sense, there is no turning back from democracy and a way must be found to allow free expression for Muslim fundamentalists and the continuation of democracy. This noble aspiration need not be an impossible mission. Rather, this objective can still be attained by the demonstration of reasonable dialogue and reconciliation on the basis of iron clad constitutional safeguards that would make certain cardinal guidelines and principles for governing permanent features that no transient possessor of political power can change or nullify.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

SOLUTION for the numerous problems and an end to economic difficulties can only be ensured through cooperation between citizens and the government which is trying to shoulder its responsibilities, said Al Rai Arabic daily. The issues accumulated over the past year can be settled through such cooperation and response to the call of duty in every sector, said the paper. With reference to the prime minister's pledge that the new government is setting a good example to be followed by various officials and the public should follow suit in word and deed. Talk about resolving economic issues and carrying out public administration reform is possible as long as the civil servants are willing and determined to help achieve that goal, said the paper. It said that Jordan has so far succeeded in serving as an example to others in the Third World, and it is hoped that serious efforts would continue and a drive towards more development would be pursued so that a better future can be created for the coming generations.

A columnist in Al Rai daily reflected on the situation in the Arab World one year after the end of the Gulf war and the liberation of Kuwait. The liberation of Kuwait from Iraqi occupation has not contributed anything towards a better Arab World, but, on the contrary, has deepened divisions, said Mahmoud Al Rimawi. It is regrettable to see the Kuwaiti leaders adopting a hostile stand towards other Arab countries at a time when the long-promised reforms and democracy inside Kuwait remains ignored. It is regrettable that the Arab countries are doing nothing to alleviate the sufferings of the Iraqi people who are still facing unjust sanctions, said the writer. It is strange and horrifying to see the Arab League, which is supposed to take action towards mending fences among Arab states, joining the Arab aligned with the U.S.-led coalition against Iraq, and it is astonishing to see the Arab League secretary general not contemplating a visit to Iraq in order to inspect the situation there or discuss measures that could be taken to bring about a general pan-Arab reconciliation, said the writer. The restoration of Kuwaiti sovereignty, Rimawi continued, has succeeded in causing further tension among Arab ranks and hardened the Western countries hostile stand against the Arabs in general and the Iraqi people in particular. He said that as we witness Iraq being reconstructed by its intrinsic capabilities, we see the Arab World being divided and Kuwait being driven to an unknown fate with no democratic rule but with unjustified mobilisation of the people's feelings against the other Arabs who had called for a pan-Arab solution for the Gulf question.

Mideast peace talks founder

(Continued from page 1)

The parties took their cases to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

Mr. Baker met separately with the Israelis and leaders of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian team. On Tuesday night, he unexpectedly summoned the Syrian and Lebanese negotiators for similar pep talks.

"He praised our position and asked us to be patient... and continue our efforts," Syrian delegation chief Muwaffak Allaf said.

Palestinian spokeswoman Ashrawi said her team reported to Mr. Baker on developments in the peace talks. She described the talk as "a very cordial" and "very frank" — a term of diplomatic parlance which usually means tough issues were raised. Dr. Ashrawi did not elaborate.

The Palestinian news agency Wafa reported on Wednesday that Palestinian delegates would walk out of the talks if Israel refused to halt settlements.

Wafa quoted delegation leader Haider Abdul Shafi as saying that the decision had been taken in the light of Israel's continued refusal to halt the settlement.

He said Israel would bear responsibility for any collapse of the peace process.

"We indicated... that we consider settlements to be a central issue and if there is no cessation of the settlement process, that practically means there is no peace process," Dr. Abdul Shafi told reporters in Washington.

He said Israel rejected the demand.

"It got pretty hot in the room," an Israeli participant said. He added that the Palestinians stopped short of presenting the Israelis with an ultimatum, but "they got pretty carried away."

Israeli-Palestinian tensions were further exacerbated Wednesday when hundreds of Jewish settlers moved mobile homes to five sites in the occupied territories to set up new settlements to "protest" a Tuesday shooting (see story below).

Tuesday's meeting broke up with no set plans for another session on Palestinian issues, although the heads of the Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian teams were meeting again Wednesday for a general meeting after their separate visits with Mr. Baker.

The clash occurred during a second day of talks at which the Palestinians described to Israel the model of self-government they want to achieve in the negotiations.

The plan calls for elections, under international supervision, to pick 180 Palestinian deputies, Palestinian and Israeli officials said. During the election process, Israeli soldiers should be withdrawn from populated Palestinian areas in the occupied territories and East Jerusalem and replaced with international peacekeepers, the officials said.

Israel is seeking to limit the discussion to matters of agenda, in order to head off a walkout by two radical right-wing parties in the government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who object to any model of Palestinian self-rule.

Israel's chief negotiator, Elyakim Rubenstein, said his side did agree that interim self-rule would be a future agenda topic but did not present any plan.

The plan, which Palestinians called "a model" for future bargaining with Israel, was given to the Israeli delegation as negotiators tried to put recent procedural wrangles behind them and move to substantive discussions.

Although the document was not made public, a copy was obtained by The Washington Post. It calls for a system centered around an assembly of 180 representatives, elected under international supervision from among all Palestinians in the territories occupied by Israel during the 1967 war.

But such achievements have not satisfied an electorate that has seen unemployment rise to its highest levels since 1986, as the economy stubbornly refused to rebound from recession.

A new poll by the New York Times and CBS television shows 67 per cent of Americans believe, Mr. Bush is spending too much time on foreign affairs. An identical number disapprove of the way he has handled the economy.

"I think I will be reelected," Mr. Bush said in a recent television interview. "I think the economy is going to be doing much better. I think confidence will be coming back."

"I'm certainly going into this as a dog-eat-dog fight, and I will do what I have to do to be reelected," he said.

Republican strategists believe voters will not forget his diplomatic skills when it comes to the election in November.

That is a view backed by former President Richard Nixon, who tasted more success in his White House days with foreign than domestic affairs.

"I know that all the polls show that people don't care about foreign policy, but they will," Mr. Nixon said during a recent television interview.

He said Mr. Bush should promote his international achievements in the campaign "because he will demolish any of the Democratic opponents, all of whom are amateurs in foreign policy."

When Mr. Bush made his recent 12-day Pacific trip, he turned away from his original goodwill visit theme and made it a mission to open Japanese markets to U.S. goods.

"Jobs, jobs, jobs" because his rallying cry to try to convince Americans he was going overseas for their interests.

But even that strategy back-

fires when expectations exceeded results. Newspapers called the trip a flop and an empty political junket.

Democrats attacked Mr. Bush, too. Representative Tom Downey of New York said: "The president must now put away his suitcase and provide the leadership we need to get the economy moving again."

These assessments of Mr. Bush's diplomatic skills were a far cry from one year ago. They are making him and his advisers wonder just when, and whether, the current mood will end.

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The Palestinian proposal calls for all residents of the territories now detained by Israel to be freed in order to take part in the elections. Once an assembly has been chosen, it would elect a chairman of an executive council, who in turn would choose 20 members to serve under him. This parliamentary government would assume authority over all population, land and resources now exercised by Israel until there is a final-status agreement.

In preparation for setting up such a government, Israel would be required to halt the building and expansion of Jewish settlements in the territories. The proposal is unclear about what would happen to existing Jewish settlements.

Immediately before the elections, Israeli military forces would withdraw from all populated areas in the territories in mutually agreed phases to agreed points along the border. This would be done under supervision of U.N. forces who also would assist in creating a Palestinian internal security force that would be controlled by the governing authority. Arrangements for external security would be worked out in negotiations with Israel.

In an interview with Israel T.V., negotiator Yosef Ben Aharon noted that agenda debates can sometimes last for weeks.

Israeli right-winger fear that self-rule to the Palestinians under Israeli military control would serve as a stepping stone to a Palestinian state in the occupied territories.

"The Shamir government is catering to the extreme right wing," said Dr. Ashrawi. "They're engaged in foot-

dragging."

The proposed interim self-rule is supposed to be arranged within one year and to last three years, after which talks would start on the final status of the territories.

When the Palestinians presented their vision of the peace process, they told the Israelis the talks should eventually lead to an independent Palestinian state — something Israel rejects out of hand.

The Palestinians demanded that Israel stop expanding the settlements. Dr. Ashrawi said Israel had already confiscated 65 per cent of the territories' lands, and if it kept going there would be nothing to negotiate about.

Israel's team, however, insisted Israelis have the right to the "whole land and refused to indicate that settlement activity would be reconsidered," she said.

But Dr. Ashrawi was careful not to present the demand for a settlement halt as a precondition for continuing the talks.

Jordan, too, told the Israelis Tuesday they should stop settlements.

"There is a very distinct possibility of the collapse of negotiations," Dr. Ashrawi said.

Mr. Baker's meetings with the heads of the delegations were portrayed by U.S. officials as routine briefings on the talks which did not indicate that he was about to become personally involved in the negotiations again.

But Mr. Baker's aides were certain to be worried by the bitter, confrontational tone the negotiations have suddenly taken in the past two days.

This third round of talks since the Madrid conference began with the sides solving a procedural dispute over the role of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation which blocked substantive talks in the last round in December.

But having finally convened around a bargaining table, the sides immediately clashed on settlements, traded insults about terrorism and human rights and reopened an old dispute about

the venue for the negotiations.

Separate talks between Israel and Syria produced no movement.

Syrian team leader Allaf said "unfortunately, we are not satisfied at all with the outcome so far."

Israel's demand that Syria recognise Israel's right to exist before anything else is discussed is "putting the cart before the horse," he said. Israel must first withdraw from occupied Syrian land, he said.

Israel, which plans to go home Wednesday night or Thursday, was turned down on its requests to all the delegations that the next round of talks be held in the Middle East. All the Arabs want to return to Washington.

Egypt expressed worries Wednesday over the slow progress of peace talks and sternly warned Israel that continued settlement-building in the occupied lands would be fatal to regional stability.

And without naming the United States, Foreign Minister Amr Musa sent Washington an oblique cautionary note that countries undermine the peace process by helping Israel build settlements.

The obvious reference was to Israeli efforts to obtain \$10 billion in housing loan guarantees from the United States, which comes up for consideration in Washington next month.

"Until now the talks have not moved from procedure to substance," Mr. Musa said. "This is cause for much worry. If they go on like this, the efficacy of bilateral talks will be affected and the entire peace process, in turn, will be affected."

Egypt wants "immediate movement to substance, which is trading land for peace and (guaranteeing) Palestinian rights," he said.

Mr. Musa said Egypt sees no sign of any Israeli readiness to stop adding to more than 120 Jewish settlements already in the occupied territories.

"Once more I say that continuing to build settlements des-

troys the bones of the peace process and kills hope for peace," Mr. Musa told reporters. "Such practices, and settlement-building in particular, are illegal and will lead to total chaos in the Middle East if continued."

"That is why we warn, warn again and repeat the warning."

They were his harshest words on the issue since becoming foreign minister last March. And he followed the admonition with the veiled warning to the United States:

"Any measure taken by any country to help Israel construct settlements would have a very bad effect on public opinion, on the peace process and its outcome. This would create instability in the region."

ascendancy."

The war hero named to head the new ruling council will return home Thursday from nearly three decades in exile, officials said Wednesday.

Mr. Boudiaf's appointment seemed partly symbolic.

The most powerful of the ruling body's five members appeared to be the defence minister, General Khaled Nezzar, one of the three generals who helped push Mr. Benjedid from power.

He played a leading role in the four-month state of emergency Mr. Benjedid declared in June to suppress fundamentalist unrest that claimed at least 55 lives.

The authorities have announced that the high state council would finish out Mr. Benjedid's term, which was to end in December 1993. That allows those in power to defer presidential elections that the constitution says must be held within 45 days of a president's resignation.

The new council will represent some of the country's most important factions: Religious activists, war veterans and democratic groups. But the military will still have the leading role.

the issue was virtually foreclosed. With that many soldiers on the ground, with the public aroused by the president's talk of Saddam Hussein as Hitler, Congress had no real option but to ratify the undisclosed decision for war.

The record of the march to war is compellingly described in a book to be published by Henry Holt and Company in March. It is "George Bush's War," by Jean Edward Smith, an American political scientist and biographer who is a professor at the University of Toronto. His subject is power, and he makes it a gripping story.

The Framers of the Constitution set out to deny to the president the English king's power to make war on his own. Over the years presidents have used troops on their own for brief actions — but not for such a massive offensive war. President Eisenhower said he would never take "any kind of action that can be interpreted as war until Congress, which has the constitutional authority, says so."

Now, by the precedent of the Gulf war, the American president has more personal power to make war than the leader of any other significant democracy. How did that happen? How did the United States stray so far from the intentions of the Framers?

The cold war did it, Professor Smith rightly says. The president's singular responsibility to reply to nuclear attack led us to focus on him as "the supreme decision-maker on all issues. On his word alone, the machinery of government was set in motion."

There was no structure for the voicing of alternatives.

To that, I would add that the theology of modern conservatism has clothed the president with the very majesty that Madison and Hamilton and the rest thought they had denied him.

Professor Smith is respectful of Mr. Bush, even admiring. "It was a superlative performance," he says of the deceptive march to war. But he worries about "the profound implications for American democracy." So should we all — The New York Times.

Never at any moment in that process did the president doubt his power to take the country into war. Just before Christmas he told ambassadors of the 28 coalition countries that if he decided to go to war, he would do so whether Congress and the people agreed or not.

Congress finally got around to a debate on Jan. 10, but by then

A year on, Bush's Gulf war rating collapses

By Laurence McQuillan
Renter

WASHINGTON — Last year's swift and crushing victory over Iraq gave George Bush the highest popularity rating of his presidency.

"It's great," Mr. Bush said then, acknowledging American cheers and popularity polls that topped 90 per cent. "I just wonder how long it will last. It won't last forever."

He need wonder no longer. His rating, in presidential election year, is now at rock bottom because of the failing U.S. economy and a growing perception that he has neglected domestic affairs to concentrate on diplomacy.

Even the removal of Iraq from Kuwait is being criticised by those complaining that Saddam Hussein remains in power, despite Mr. Bush's best efforts.

"His rating, in presidential election year, is now at rock bottom because of the failing U.S. economy and a growing perception that he has neglected domestic affairs to concentrate on diplomacy."

Mr. Bush overcame tremendous odds and persuaded most of the Arab World to join his international coalition against Saddam Hussein, despite predictions that it would never hold together.

He was at the helm when the cherished dream that the cold war would end became a reality. He also stood firm amid the turbulence that saw the Soviet Union disintegrate and emerge, in part, as the Commonwealth of Independent States.

But even that strategy back-

fires when expectations exceeded results. Newspapers called the trip a flop and an empty political junket.

Democrats attacked Mr. Bush, too. Representative Tom Downey of New York said: "The president must now put away his suitcase and provide the leadership we need to get the economy moving again."

These assessments of Mr. Bush's diplomatic skills were a far cry from one year ago. They are making him and his advisers wonder just when, and whether, the current mood will end.

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In an interview with Israel T.V., negotiator Yosef Ben Aharon noted that agenda debates can sometimes last for weeks.

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"I'm concerned about jobs, jobs, jobs! — my job, Dan Quayle's job, my speechwriters' jobs..."



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On his word alone

By Anthony Lewis
"The Constitution supposes what the history of all governments..."

From Aug. 2, 1990, when Iraq invaded Kuwait, to the first bombs falling on Baghdad Jan. 17, 1991, President Bush manoeuvred the country towards war. Deception obscured the process then. Now we can see the steady, skillful march to war. And it was intensely personal: George Bush's decision.

On the morning of Aug. 2, Mr. Bush told reporters, "We're not discussing intervention," but later that day he met Margaret Thatcher in Aspen, Colo., and she filled him full of Munich and Churchill. That afternoon the president coddled Iraq's "naked aggression."

Over the next few days Mr. Bush and his aides pressed Saudi Arabia to ask for American troops. On Aug. 8 the president announced that "the Saudi government requested our help and I have responded to that request."

He said, "The mission of our troops is wholly defensive." John Sununu briefed the press that 50,000 troops would be sent. The number actually planned was 250,000.

On Oct. 31 the president decided to double the deployment to open the way for offensive action against Iraq. He did not announce the increase until Nov. 8, after the congressional election. On Nov. 14 he assured congressional leaders that the troops' mission was still defensive: "I have not crossed any Rubicon."

On Dec. 29 Mr. Bush gave the order for war. He told Gen. Colin Powell to attack starting at 3 a.m. Jan. 17 if Iraq had not withdrawn from Kuwait.

Never at any moment in that process did the president doubt his power to take the country into war. Just before Christmas he told ambassadors of the 28 coalition countries that if he decided to go to war, he would do so whether Congress and the people agreed or not.

Congress finally got around to a debate on Jan. 10, but by then

the issue was virtually foreclosed. With that many soldiers on the ground, with the public aroused by the president's talk of Saddam Hussein as Hitler, Congress had no real option but to ratify the undisclosed decision for war.

The record of the march to war is compellingly described in a book to be published by Henry Holt and Company in March. It is "George Bush's War," by Jean Edward Smith, an American political scientist and biographer who is a professor at the University of Toronto. His subject is power, and he makes it a gripping story.

The Framers of the Constitution set out to deny to the president the English king's power to make war on his own. Over the years presidents have used troops on their own for brief actions — but not for such a massive offensive war. President Eisenhower said he would never take "any kind of action that can be interpreted as war until Congress, which has the constitutional authority, says so."

Now, by the precedent of the Gulf war, the American president has more personal power to make war than the leader of any other significant democracy. How did that happen? How did the United States stray so far from the intentions of the Framers?

The cold war did it, Professor Smith rightly says. The president's singular responsibility to reply to nuclear attack led us to focus on him as "the supreme decision-maker on all issues. On his word alone, the machinery of government was set in motion."

There was no structure for the voicing of alternatives.

To that, I would add that the theology of modern conservatism has clothed the president with the very majesty that Madison and Hamilton and the rest thought they had denied him.

Professor Smith is respectful of Mr. Bush, even admiring. "It was a superlative performance," he says of the deceptive march to war

Egyptian play breaks new ground in political satire

By Sara Al Gammal
Reuter

CAIRO — An Egyptian play that calls Arabs dictatorial and ignorant is thrilling audiences in Cairo and breaking any ground in what may be said on stage in the Arab World.

"In Plain Arabic" by Lenin Al Ramly portrays Arabs as over-emotional and backward people who cannot compete with the West because they waste their time chanting slogans and fail to deal with reality.

It says little the educated classes have not muttered to each other privately in mo-

ments of despair for years. But airing such opinions in public is a breakthrough for theatre in the region, where most governments are at best autocratic and at worst dictatorial.

It reflects a political relaxation in Egypt over the 10 years of President Hosni Mubarak's rule. He has legalised opposition parties and allowed them to publish newspapers which routinely criticise the government.

"In Plain Arabic" tells the story of 14 Arab students, each a stereotype of a different Arab country, who pretend to be pious Muslims but sneak off to a fancy-dress

party in a discotheque at night.

A character called Fayed Ammar, who represents Palestine, is beaten up by British thugs and staggers on-stage dripping blood.

But Fayed, sensitive to what is portrayed as a Western view of Arabs as lazy people of double standards, tells his friends the insult that hurt the most.

"They called me, they called me," he pants, "an Arab."

At the discotheque, Fayed disappears with a glamorous woman who represents Israel and it is later confirmed he has been kidnapped. The

other students, standing for Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Yemen, Sudan and Morocco fail to do anything useful to get him back.

They hold a grand conference at which everyone shouts at once, everyone wants to be chairman, and nothing is decided except the wording of a resolution proclaiming Arab unity.

The play is studied with verbal games and slapstick jokes which pillory Arab attitudes. The Iraqi is a bug-thug who keeps threatening violence, the Syrian is constantly looking over his

shoulder scared of being monitored by the intelligence services, the Sudanese is hungry and usually drunk.

The Lebanese is always looking to make money. The Algerian objects to everything on principle. The Jordanian agrees with everyone, however contradictory their opinions.

The Egyptian is portrayed as a moderating influence and the most reasonable person in the group.

But there are more bitter scenes. Arab and Western students hold a televised debate to discuss Western charges that the Palestinian, Fayed, is a terrorist.

For practice, an Egyptian television journalist volunteers to argue the Western point of view and condemns Arab decision-makers in brutal terms.

"You Arabs are dictators, ignorant, stupid," he declares. "You are mentally crippled, anaemic."

But the Arab students ostracise him for believing there might be some truth in the Western point of view. He loses his job and his fiancée.

"The world hides behind a big mask, one mask on top of another. But we Arabs have 100 masks," the journalist laments. "We have lost sight

of the truth. But anyone who reveals the truth is whipped with 100,000 lashes and then bled."

Mohammad Sobhi, well known comic actor and director, chose 40 amateurs from 2,000 applicants to perform the play. Only eight people went to its opening night at the New Opera Theatre, but three weeks later it became a hit and now often plays to packed houses of around 500.

Ramly, 46-year-old author of a series of social satires and fantasies, said he started writing the piece in 1970 but abandoned it until recently because he thought censors would force him to cut it.

"I'm not trying to say anything specific," Ramly told Reuters in an interview. "What I am doing is urging people, Arabs, to think about the problem within them. The play does not answer any questions, it poses them."

Ramly said he believed the Arab mentality was stagnant. "The Arab mentality is built on fiction, not on scientific reality. It is one-track-minded and cannot accept an opinion other than its own."

"It is a mentality which tends to postpone problems and depends on God or the unknown to solve them," Ramly declared. "It has ceased to be inventive or creative."

Cairo Book Fair steers fine line to free expression

By John West
Reuter

CAIRO — A major book fair here is pointing up the delicate balance of volatile political, cultural and religious forces in Egypt.

Bigger than ever this year, the Cairo International Book Fair is billed as second only to Frankfurt's. It has attracted publishers from across the world, hawking 43 million books to tens of thousands of visitors every day.

The book fair drew more than half a million visitors in the first three days, according to an official from the General Egyptian Book Organisation (GEBO) organising the fair.

Meanwhile, a local author waits to start serving an eight-year prison sentence for defaming Islam and a government censorship bureau is on hand ready to confiscate books that may be judged offensive.

As elsewhere in Egypt, an official policy of freedom of expression at the fair is constrained by the explosive sensitivities of religion and national feeling.

Public debates on the fair's fringes feature prominent leftists who oppose the Middle East peace process and members of the opposition Muslim Brotherhood who advocate an Islamic state in Egypt, both arguing against those who support the government.

But taboos still linger.

A GEBO official said a discussion of the novel, *The Naked*, by Egyptian author Ibrahim Isa, had to be postponed because the "atmosphere was not conducive."

The book had gained notoriety for sex scenes.

And bubbling below the surface, the talk of the day in the fair's coffee-house, tents and publishers' stands is the case of Alaa Hamed.

Hamed, until recently a little-known local author, has been dubbed "Egypt's Rushdie" — a reference to Indian-born author Salman Rushdie, in hiding in Britain since 1989 after Iran's former spiritual leader Ayatollah Khomeini denounced his book, *The Satanic Verses*, as blasphemous and offered a reward

for his death.

Hamed was sentenced last month to eight years in jail for defaming Islam and threatening "national unity and social peace" after Al-Azhar Islamic University called his novel, *A Distance in a Man's Mind*, blasphemous.

The book opens with a man asking: "Who am I? A name in a waiting list. A Muslim by heredity. If I were born in an atheist mould, I would have been one. A person has no choice in his birth or religion."

Many writers and literary critics say Hamed's case calls censorship into question.

"We should abolish the system entirely and let different points of view interact," said Hamid Abu Ahmad, himself a professor of litera-

ture at Al-Azhar. "To have Al-Azhar or anyone else vetting books, this is an affront."

In his office, next to the Egyptian branch of Amnesty International which is recruiting members from the throng, Colonel Amr Fayad from the Artistic Items Censorship Administration says there is complete freedom to publish in Egypt.

"This is a unique, one-off case," he told Reuters. "The issue is not religious... (but) playing on religion against the interests of the state."

He said his bureau's major function at the fair was to check for pirated books.

Even Mohammad Madbouh, who as owner of a famous central Cairo bookstore distributing Hamed's

book was also sentenced to eight years in prison, described the case as a "mistake" and said there was complete freedom to publish in Egypt.

At a packed debate on whether Egypt should become an Islamic state, secular intellectuals argued with Muslim clerics on the same platform.

But the balance between free debate and security remains delicate.

While about 2,000 people — overwhelmingly Islamist in their sympathies — stood outside the conference hall, sometimes shouting in support of the Islamic speakers, several truckloads of armed riot police sat round the corner.

Prince Charles seeks new role

By Anne Senior
Reuter

LONDON — Prince Charles is a man trying to make it in a woman's world.

The 43-year-old heir to the throne of Queen Elizabeth has been casting around for a more active part to play in the British monarchy than being a professional stand-in for his mother and the man who made Princess Diana a star.

But he has stirred heated controversy in the process, raising questions about royal behaviour and whether the shrinking powers of the monarchy have left enough of a role for a man of intellectual enthusiasm and energy like the prince.

Politics and power, the traditional pursuits of upper class men with money, are closed by convention to Britain's royals who are meant to provide an impartial symbol of national unity.

What remains is a social grind of public engagements and celebrations of British pomp, which the women of the royal family — given unusual prominence through a female monarch — seem to have embraced more readily than the men in recent years.

Doing good and looking good have become the main family occupations, at least as far as many British people are concerned.

But Prince Charles — amateur philosopher, environmentalist, watercolour artist and sporty "action man" — has declared himself unhappy with the idea of a "soap opera" monarchy and is trying to turn it into more of a paternalistic force in society.

As well as railing about the general ills of the world, he has spoken out on sensitive domestic matters such as poverty and homelessness, earning a reputation as a crusading liberal taking on the towering edifice of the ruling Conservative Party.

The Conservative government, used to a more docile monarchy, is apparently not pleased, especially as it faces a difficult election in the coming months and is nurturing a caring image.

The prince's concern for the environment and obvious distaste for the consumer society fly in the face of the "get-rich-quick" mentality of the 1980s which helped former Premier Margaret Thatcher to an unbroken 11 years in power.

Government displeasure is reflected in a burst of criticism of the prince in national newspapers, where he has been rebuked for writing to politicians about his concerns. Unidentified government ministers quoted in the press have complained that the prince has taken on a "pink glow".

He is certainly taking the 19th century definition of the royal prerogative by constitutional analyst Walter Bage-

hot — "to be consulted, to encourage and to warn" — to the limit.

The prince has already caused a storm by debating the merits of changing Britain's electoral system from first-past-the-post to proportional representation, a touchy subject ahead of an election which is shaping up as a close contest.

Backed by a new team of advisers, including a former press officer for the opposition Labour Party, the prince appears to be trying to put his own stamp on the monarchy as his mother celebrates 40 years as a sovereign this year.

But his outspoken views have had a mixed reception from his future subjects, torn between respect for his commitment to his country and frustration with his negative tone. He has a respectable rating in popularity polls, but often lags behind the women of the family including his wife Princess Diana.

Doom-laden warnings of social decay have jarred with people grown used to a light-hearted royalty which parades designer fashions and smiles prettily for the cameras.

He has been blasted as dangerous crank, a "royal gas bag" and a "millionaire leftist" whose carping could be the death of the monarchy, one of the world's few surviving royal dynasties.

"If such a tactless, cranky, bad-tempered figure were to ascend the throne at this juncture... it would only be a matter of time before we all decided that it was time to declare a republic," wrote novelist A.N. Wilson earlier this year.

The Independent newspaper, which avoids royal gossip but gives wide play to constitutional matters, recently came out in favour of Britain's crusading prince. He was bravely going where "short-termist" politicians fear to tread, it said.

His "radical" message was that the world should "cherish the achievements of the past, learn from its lessons, and look far enough ahead to ensure that the world is not being irreparably damaged for future generations," the Independent said in an editorial.

Princess Diana is a media darling who works hard but appears to onlookers to have no political thought in her head.

Princess Diana knows her royal niche — it is the same nurturing, caring work done by generations of noblewomen and exemplified by the popular royal dowager, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

Royal history has been marked by a succession of matriarchs whose femininity helped them win national affection.

Charles, royal watchers say, is working out how best to use his own position for the national good.

Fatima Ibrahim — a voice for women

By Max De Lothiniere

LONDON — "Women are not sheep," says Fatima Ibrahim, Sudan's veteran feminist. "Even if they are not educated, they cannot be easily led, unless they can be convinced that a new activity or form of life is suitable for them." Emphasis is given to her statement with a pointed finger punctuating each phrase. She is speaking about the women of Sudan and others in the developing world.

Thirty five years ago, Mrs. Ibrahim helped establish the women's movement in Sudan and she has long been the country's foremost advocate of women's rights. Today she is exiled in London, having been refused permission to return home by a regime which, she says, has sought to set the clock back. "Reactionary" is a word she uses often when describing the Khartoum government. Others would agree that going back to medieval times seems to be Sudan's goal. Besides the bloody civil war between north and south that has brought mass starvation, Islamic fundamentalism seems to have found a new cradle in Africa's largest country. Reports that Iran is financing training camps in Sudan for fundamentalists from North Africa and the Mideast are worrying its neighbours.

In her rich accent, a blend of African and Arabic, Mrs. Ibrahim explains: "I am hopeful that none of these reactionary parties will last for long." Her strong voice does not match the small frame of this 57-year-old advocate. When she speaks, one can hear the echoes of many speeches she has made; but she laughs easily — at herself — and more extraordinarily, at some of the tragic ironies of her life. At the age of 33 she became the first woman in Sudan to be elected as a member of parliament, and five years later she became one of the first women to be imprisoned for

her beliefs. Her husband, a trade unionist, was executed in 1971 for his opposition to the dictatorship of former Sudanese President Jaafar Mohammed Numeiri. Mrs. Ibrahim's exile has separated her from her only child, a son, who is studying medicine in Khartoum.

Her lifetime's work has given her a profound understanding of the inequality experienced by women and today, in spite of her exile, she is continuing to campaign. Five months after arriving in the United Kingdom in October 1990 she was elected president of the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) at its congress in Sheffield, in northern England. With 144 women's organisations affiliated to it worldwide, the WIDF is one of the world's leading forums for the advancement of women. It has consultative status with the United Nations.

Mrs. Ibrahim is responsible for coordinating WIDF participation in the U.N.'s Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in 1995. As she sets out some of her plans for the conference, it is obvious that she relishes in the freedom she now has to communicate her ideas. For decades women in Sudan have been silenced; now Mrs. Ibrahim has an international audience. "My first job is to launch a campaign for women's and children's rights," she explains. "We are trying to mobilise all the women's organisations across the world, in order to make the United Nations Convention on Women a reality." Introduced in 1981, the convention spells out measures that governments must take to ensure that their legislation does not discriminate against women. So far 107 nations have ratified the convention. Adds Mrs. Ibrahim: "We will contact trade unions, youth groups, lawyers, MPs, (members of parliament) political parties, and even governments to remind them that they have signed



Living in exile in London, Sudanese Fatima Ibrahim was recently elected president of the Women's International Democratic Federation which regroups women's movements from over 100 nations.

the U.N. Convention on Women and that they must uphold it. We will do this in peaceful ways."

"It is not a matter of women ruling over men," she says. "Men as a sex are not our enemies, and as a sex they are not responsible for our situation. It is the regimes who are our enemies." The present government in Sudan which came to power in a military coup in 1989, is inspired by Islamic fundamentalism. Mrs. Ibrahim is quick to note that, although she opposes the regime, religion is an important part of her life. Much of her work has been aimed at separating traditional practices and beliefs which oppress women, from the practice of Islam. Soon after she helped establish the Sudanese women's movement, she and her colleagues realised that they needed to probe their religious faith.

"We lived in a society that looked down on women as second class citizens," she explains, "and some Islamic leaders claimed that Islam was against equality of the sexes. We discovered, by

studying the Koran, that Islam does not prefer men over women, or deny women the right to practice their political, social and economic rights. With Islam itself we began to fight against our enemies in the (fundamentalist) Islamic parties." What made it possible for her to do this, she admits, was the education that she was given by her parents, something highly unusual for her generation.

Mrs. Ibrahim was born in Khartoum into a well-to-do family, and her mother and aunts: were the first women in Sudan to be taught English formally. But her mother's education was not approved of in the highly conservative society of the time and she was forced to give up school and marry. Nevertheless, she refused to let her three daughters be deprived of a formal education. "At home there was a big library," Mrs. Ibrahim recalls, "so I loved reading, but this is why I hated domestic work, and I always used to protest when they asked me to fetch tea, or cook. I said 'why don't you ask my brothers? Who di-

vided the work between men and women, that gives the men work outside the house and women inside?" Although in her childhood home sons and daughters were equally loved, she could not escape nor accept a fact which has shaped the course of her life ever since: "In our society they treat women as an inferior sex," she explains.

In 1952 when she took part in forming the Sudanese Women's Union, its aims were to make women aware of their situation and the rights of their children. The mid-1950s were a time of expectation for Mrs. Ibrahim and her colleagues as Sudan gained independence from Britain in 1956 and with it, its first democratically elected government. "We thought that changing the white faces of the colonialist ruler for the black faces of Sudanese people was enough to solve our problems," she says. But they were disappointed. For example, the union asked the new government to introduce trained midwives into rural communities where deaths during childbirth were high. "We thought this humanitarian demand would be fulfilled," Mrs. Ibrahim recalls "but to our astonishment it was refused."

"We realised then that charity and reform could not solve women's problems — charity will not solve the problem of poverty and reform will not emancipate women or raise their standard of education." Instead, Mrs. Ibrahim and her colleagues set out to gain a voice in local politics so people would start to listen. By the end of the 1950s the civil government was overthrown by the first in a series of military coups, the union was banned and Mrs. Ibrahim was forced to work underground. In 1964, the military regime was itself overthrown in a popular uprising and the National Front government, made up of political parties and trade unions, was installed. The Front not only gave all women the vote but

allowed them to stand for parliament as well.

In the following year, elections were held and Mrs. Ibrahim became the first and only woman Member of Parliament. By 1968 a law was passed giving women equal pay, and a year later equal pension rights and employment rights were added to the statute books. Through a process of debate and appeals to the Islamic judiciary, Mrs. Ibrahim and her colleagues succeeded in making it illegal for a woman to be married against her will; they gained custody rights for divorced women and to divorce a husband on the grounds of cruelty or violence. "We were even more advanced than Egypt," says Mrs. Ibrahim with pride.

Today, Sudan has fallen far behind its Arab neighbour, and the crisis facing the people of Sudan seems to remain a low priority for the world. Nevertheless, Mrs. Ibrahim is optimistic. Hope is a vital force, but one senses that there is something stronger driving her. To help explain what keeps her going, she recalls an incident when she was a young woman, at home with her father. "One very hot day, my father and I had just started our lunch when there was a knock at the door," she says. "It was a small girl selling brooms. She was much too young to be working so I asked her why she had to work. She said her mother was divorced and that her father gave them no money. I wanted to go with the child to her mother and see how I could help, but my father became angry and did not let me go. When we sat down again at table I was so upset I could not even swallow the food. My father saw this and said 'Fatima, I have always thought you do your work because it is something you believe in your head — you do it to be different. But now I know you are doing it from your heart'" — World News Link.

The two sides of being nice

By Maha Addasi

JUST by looking around it is very safe to assume that being nice to others may be hazardous to your health. That is especially so when you are talking about eating and drinking, among other things.

Let us look at a typical case. You are at a dinner party and the host or hostess (or both) are taking special care of you. Well after you have had your fill of food the hosts decide that you "just haven't eaten anything" and they start placing "just this small piece of meat" on your plate — "just" having the size of a miniature lamb.

So, by the time dinner is over you leave on a stretcher straight to the hospital.

Then there is the case of smoking. A person asks you to "join in for the beck of it. I don't want to smoke alone." The result is that you become a smoker, but do not consider yourself one because you are not carrying your own packet.

The danger lies in the fact that people have started to go along with these niceties and have accepted them as the norm. Some have taken that a step further and consider them a necessity.

"She invited me to dinner and ignored me," one woman said about her hostess. "She barely came up to me and asked me to the dinner table. And when I finished my plate she never told me to have a second helping."

It is true that being nice to someone, and meaning it, is an appealing gesture. And it is even better that you thank a hostess on her hard work in preparing for an event because it makes her work seem worthwhile to her. But that does not mean that "she didn't tell me my sweater is nice because she must have been jealous," as is the common belief among "certain" people. Or "she complimented me on the cooking, but she was only being sarcastic. She did



nor really mean it."

In short, complimenting others can be misunderstood and can only be positive under one condition. That compliments are said and received in good grace and spirit.

Scholar gives guidance in art of international cursing

SAN FRANCISCO (R) — You're in a cafe in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia, a waiter spills hot coffee on you and what you want to say to him is not in the standard guidebook.

What to do? If you have the latest issue of Maledicta, published by Californian scholar Reinhold Aman, you could refer to the article on "elementary Georgian obscenity" and find several possibilities.

"Mama jaglo" you could shout, calling the waiter the father of a dog.

Or, if you have a particularly good Georgian accent, you might try "sen cimesa ra gaatrake," which is Georgian for "what a pain in the arse you are."

Subtitled The International Journal of Verbal Aggression, Maledicta — Latin for "bad words" — is published every two years by Aman, who holds a doctorate in mediaeval languages.

Aman's journey into the dark night of international bad language began when he was a professor at the University of Wisconsin, where he was studying a glossary of 19th century Bavarian dialect.

He says he found the sentence "I'm going to hit you over the head with a spoon."

you monkey."

"I thought, why would you call a human being a monkey?" Aman recalled in a recent telephone interview from his Santa Rosa home. He eventually compiled a dictionary of 2,500 Bavarian Austrian insults.

He said that in part because of this research in the gutter of international linguistics he was denied tenure in 1972 at the university, which he now refers to as a "dunghill."

Aman has published 10 issues of Maledicta since leaving the university.

Subjects have included anti-religious graffiti in New York, offensive rock band names, Polish jokes about the Soviet nuclear accident at Chernobyl, and what Aman calls "poetic copulation euphemisms."

The current issue contains everything from tasteless jokes about AIDS and the explosion of the space shuttle Challenger to a glossary of Swahili curses. The next issue promises to be just as spicy, said its editor.

"I have a glossary of sexual and excretory terms from Japan," he said. "I have a very nice glossary coming out on Finnish euphemisms."

Much of Maledicta's material cannot be repeated in a

family newspaper.

One article in the current issue includes slang terms for breasts from 35 states and 12 countries. Opposite each term, Aman lists the age, religion and sex of each segment of the population which uses the term.

The bawdy nature of much of his material notwithstanding, Aman claims that one-third of his 2,000 contributors and readers are academics. Subscribers and contributors come from 71 countries, he said.

A professor from Croatia recently sent Aman a dispatch relaying a Croatian television interview with a man whose home had just been bombed by Serbian forces.

"He cursed in the most obscene language, and not one word was censored," Aman said. "And nobody complained because this was the only language reasonable in that situation."

While many of the insults published in Maledicta excel in their earthiness, others are more sophisticated.

"Yiddish is the most exquisite for cursing," said Aman.

"I have about 2,000 Yiddish insults, and what I like about them is that they're clean," he said.

"May you inherit a mansion," he began, relating one of the Yiddish curses from his collection. "May there be a thousand rooms in the mansion, and may there be a thousand beds in each room — and may cholera throw you from bed to bed."

Another: "May you inherit a shipload full of gold — and it shouldn't pay for your doctor's bills."

About the worst thing to call a woman in Yiddish is "farshloyme Mezuza," or dusty Mezuza, he said.

A Mezuza is a thumb-sized tablet, supposed to contain a piece of the Torah, which religious Jews put on their doorposts. They are supposed to kiss it every time they enter the home.

To call a woman a dusty Mezuza is to say she has not been kissed in years.

Aman says insults, curses and other bad language are a window on the soul of a culture.

Anglo-Saxon cultures favour insults dealing with body parts and functions, while the cultures of the Middle and Far East like ancestor insults, he said.

Not even Aman is immune to insult. Asked to describe himself, he replied: "I'm a fat, four-eyed, filthy-mouthed runt."

The road of hope

By E. Yaghi

THE Sahel (which means coast in English and plain in Arabic) pertains to the grass lands bordering the desert and in North Africa encompasses about 20 per cent of 11,700,000 square miles of the African landmass. It stretches from Senegal in the west to Chad and portions of Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan in the east. Twenty-one years of drought has left the dirt gray and powdery.

When a famine plunders the Sahel, tens of thousands of people die. Famine erodes family structure and severs bonds of tribal traditions as people leave their homes due to starvation and the encroaching desert. The spectre of famine has touched millions of lives in Mali, Mauritania and other Sahelian countries. Although there are borders between Sahelian nations and each country has its own flag and national anthem, the people of the Sahel are one in their shared misery.

Mauritania is the worst stricken of Sahelian nations. The desert nomad is vanishing. Sand is taking over the country, burying villages and compressing more and more of the population into the seaside capital of Nouakchott which has been called the largest refugee camp in the world. The main route in Mauritania is called the Road of Hope. About 100 miles from Mouakchott there is a settlement beside the road. It is called Tignia Oasis. It is here that Abdullah lives, a boy around 12 years of age with curly hair the colour of sand and fair eyes. At times, Abdullah is lucky enough to attend school and his education taught him some unique ideas to not only save himself from starvation, but his whole village.

One hot day after attending school, Abdullah rushed home to tell his mother some good news. "Mom," he said as he burst in the doorway to the hut he called home, "you know how you have to walk so far in search of firewood?" His mother nodded a silent affirmative answer. "Well, I've got an idea of a way to help!" he said as he approached their small "stove" which consisted of only three stones on which a pot could sit. "Now, if we build a little enclosure over these stones," he said demonstrating with his hands, "we'll save about five times the wood we use now and you won't have to walk so far from home every day in search of wood. What do you think?"

His mother sat in a slump on the dirt floor. He looked at her baggy face which was thin and frail. On her lap sat his baby brother. So many of her babies had died, Abdullah thought, some from diarrhea, some from measles and some from other diseases. Abdullah knew this kind of life promised no future for them. His mother's dull voice broke his thoughts and said, "if you think it will work, do it then. It is useless to wait for your father to accomplish much since he went to work in Boulimit. He hardly comes home. It's a big responsibility coping without him and I'm tired, very tired."

So Abdullah, little encouraged by his mother and having learned to be independent from an early age, found some old metal. With the help of one of the elders in his village, they made a suitable enclosure for the stove. Abdullah tugged the enclosure home and several days later his

mother said for the first time in an excited voice: "Son, since you've made our stove better, I don't have to go out every day for wood. Now thanks to you and your teacher, I save wood and time. Other women from the village are doing the same thing. I guess some good will come from your schooling after all." There was the sound of approval in her voice.

But Abdullah wasn't content to stop here. A few weeks later when the smell of dust hung especially thick in the air, the boy's teacher said to his small class, "We cannot depend on global sympathy anymore. We have to help ourselves. Teams come in here from all over the world and bring modern trucks and pumps for wells, but when they break down no one knows how to fix them and we're right where we started with worthless dumps of rusted metal. Our only chance for survival is to educate ourselves, grow our own food and plant trees to keep the desert back." He pointed to some potted young trees and said earnestly, "All of you must go home and plant these trees in rows as windbreakers and also as future fuel. These trees are gifts from CARE. I want you to care for them!"

So they did. Abdullah and his classmates all grabbed the potted trees and took them home where each planted rows of trees in the shifting sand. Within a year Abdullah heard the village women marvel at the success of the trees that were planted by the schoolboys. The women also expressed satisfaction that each family had planted a small garden which they protected from erosion and small animals by fences. However, in spite of these remarkable achievements, Abdullah was not content and noticed that many things were still wrong. The local women still had to go from village to village in search of more food, he thought. The Road of Hope was so far felt to be a Road of Despair. There was one she-camel in Abdullah's village. One afternoon while eating food cooked on their new stove, Abdullah stated, "Mom, we need a she-camel. Camels have excellent milk, better than cow's milk. Dad kept some money here. Let's use it. We can't starve to death. Look at the baby. He's dangerously thin. You're also too thin and so am I. If the camel can't give us milk then we'll sell it or eat it. What do you think?"

He saw a flicker of optimism twinkle in her eyes as she exclaimed, "You've had some good ideas Abdullah so we'll take this one last chance. See how much a camel costs and if we have the money, we'll buy it. It has been so long since we've known hope." Her voice sounded nearly as thin as she, but there was something new in it that hadn't been there a year ago. Abdullah liked to think that he had a great deal to do with that change.

And so it was, that the little Tignia Oasis began baving camels, trees as windbreakers and little self-sustaining gardens that flourished with green leaves and ripe fruits and perforated the dry air with the smell of new growth. Abdullah bought the camel and other families followed suit. The Road of Hope once again literally became just that instead of a road of despair. Abdullah helped his villagers fight off desertification and with this battle won, his people gained their own self-respect and confidence because they helped themselves and learned how to survive on their land.

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, Jan. 16

8:30 The Simpsons

The Flanders try to be friendly to the Simpsons, but in vain.

9:10 NBA Basketball

10:00 News in English

10:20 Movie Of The Week

Where Pigeons Go To Die
Starring: Carney Cliff

A story of young John and his grandfather in the countryside during the grandfather's last years.

Friday, Jan. 17

8:30 Coach

Father And Son Reunion

Hayden, a peacemaker, brings together Luther and his father whom Luther has not seen for fifty years.

9:10 Derrick

Leva

There is a fight between Peter and his wife over their son's custody. The wife gets killed and Derrick investigates the case.

10:00 News in English

Chancer

Hazard

Jo is offered a job by Stephen's ex-manager, and Stephen quits. Douglas Motors because he is blamed for the loss of the Japanese deal.

Saturday, Jan. 18

8:30 America's Funniest Home Videos

9:10 Encounter

9:30 Q.E.D.

A documentary about future electronic simulators for war



Michael Caine stars in Jekyll and Hyde Saturday at 10:20

and space.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Feature Film

Jekyll and Hyde
Starring: Michael Caine, Chory Ladd.

A Victorian research chemist finds formula which separates the good and evil in his soul. When the latter predominates he becomes a rampaging monster.

Sunday, Jan. 19

8:30 Empty Nest

Dr. Harry's house is robbed. He gets his daughter Barbara, a policewoman, and her retired colleague to help in installing a warning system in the house.

9:10 Nippon

Being Japanese

The national psychology of the Japanese has fascinated Westerners for centuries but never more so than now. A candid look at everyday life and the Japanese philosophy of valuing the group over the individual.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Gabriel's Fire

One Flew Over The Bird's Nest

Monday, Jan. 20

8:30 Hey Dad

Betty, the maid, keeps asking for a raise until Martin agrees. Then Betty meets one of her old friends who proposes to her.

9:10 Capital City

Circa fails to pull a deal of German marks through and is in a lot of trouble. But a visiting friend of Michele helps out.

10:00 News in English

10:20 The Elite
The Elite stops a gang that smuggles rare animals and investigate a dumping site where toxic waste is illegally dumped.

Tuesday, Jan. 21

8:30 Evening Shade

Somebody punches grand-

father in the nose.

9:10 Colour In The Creek

John Fletcher's family celebrates Christmas with the neighbours. Their neighbour's son Robby, who is facing problems following the death of his father, escapes.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Titmus Regained

Leslie visits a private investigator and instructs him to investigate Tony Sidonia.

Wednesday, Jan. 22

8:30 Teech

The principal insists on playing table tennis with Mr. Gibson at home.

9:10 Documentary — Voice Of The Planet

Star Struck
The Russians, the Americans and the Japanese are experimenting on the possibility of life on other planets. Would this be possible?

10:00 News in English

10:20 Voices Within

Paris exhibition recalls the golden age of the ocean liner

By Bernard Edinger
Reuter

PARIS — Parisians fed up with the capital's wet, grey winter can find solace in a new exhibition which vividly recalls the glamorous era of trans-Atlantic passenger liners.

During those grand years of the "floating palaces," passenger lists were a who's who of high society, including millionaires and Hollywood movie stars.

Visitors to the "Paquebots de Legende" (Legendary Liners) exhibition in the Maritime Museum at the Palais de Chaillot can recapture some of the atmosphere of that period.

They can have their picture taken while posing next to deckchairs salvaged from famed liners or leaning against a ship's deck railings.

The exhibition, which opened last month and runs until March, includes hundreds of models, maps, post-

ers, films and other memorabilia covering a century and a half of sailing history.

It records the first uncertain attempts at trans-Atlantic steam travel in 1819 which took 28 days, twice as long as sail boat crossings at the time.

The exhibition goes on to the first regular service between Europe and North America in 1838 by the Sirius and Great Western ships. They were small vessels which pitched and rolled while consuming up to 500 tonnes of coal on each crossing.

The final part of the exhibition features the 1960 launch of the 55,000-tonne luxury liner France.

When President Charles de Gaulle led the crowd at the St Nazaire Shipyard in singing France's national anthem La Marseillaise, he could have had no inkling that the ship would be a commercial disaster.

The advent of the Boeing 707 jetliner opened the way

to mass air travel in the early 1960s and passenger traffic on the trans-Atlantic liners slumped.

The France was withdrawn from service in 1974 and sold to a Norwegian cruise operator. Its name was changed to the Norway, prompting French pop singer Michel Sardou to record the bitter hit single "Don't Ever Call Me France Again."

The exhibition's main emphasis is on the period between the two world wars, the "golden age" of floating palaces such as the French liners Normandie and Ile De France and Britain's Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth.

The first class dining hall of the Normandie was longer than the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles Palace, residence of France's kings. It could sit 700 people.

The exhibition includes elegantly recreated state rooms and private dining rooms from some of the best known French liners, complete with priceless crystal

ware and art-deco furniture. In stark contrast, it also recalls the grim trans-Atlantic crossings of immigrants seeking sanctuary in the new world at the turn of the century. They were often left to huddle below the decks.

Steamships carried 34 million would-be immigrants from Europe to New York's Ellis Island, gateway to a new life in the United States.

The exhibition records some of the tragedies which befell ocean liners, such as the 1912 sinking of the Titanic.

Trans-Atlantic crossings may be a thing of the past but holiday cruises to sunny destinations have become increasingly popular in today's world.

But gone forever are the exquisitely carved wooden panels and beautiful tapestries that graced the smoking lounges and reception rooms of the old liners.

Today's ships are decorated with plastics and synthetics.

Isabelle Huppert makes a career out of keeping secrets on screen

By Hilal Itale

The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Like the heroine of a Hitchcock thriller, Isabelle Huppert is cool, calm and sophisticated, her eyes green and penetrating, her smile thin and mysterious.

The French actress has made a career out of keeping secrets on screen. She was a fugitive in *Sincerely Charlotte*, a mistress in *The Judge* and *The Assassin* and an adulteress in *The Bedroom Window*. She left her husband in *Loulou* and poisoned her parents in *Violette*.

Always, she has been well served by her unflappable demeanor, her facial movements at times restricted to a

blink or a sideways glance, like a painting in a haunted house. It is the look of a woman who says one thing and thinks another, who presents herself as a question that only the brave would dare try to answer.

"It's amusing," Huppert, 36, said during a recent interview at a Manhattan hotel. "It's like you are playing with the audience. It's always very exciting to show ambiguities and complexity in the character."

"It's my way of being seductive with the audience. It's something I feel comfortable with, to show contradictions and show people in extreme situations. It's generally a good script when you have a double life. It

makes the story more spicy."

Huppert speaks in an even, matter-of-fact style, the verbal equivalent of a shrug of the shoulders. Even when discussing her latest role — the title character in the latest adaptation of Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* — she can make it all sound so routine, just another good role for a professional actress.

Emma Bovary, the bored housewife longing for romance, would appear to be a part Huppert was destined to play. There are lines in the novel — "that straight-pleated dress hid a heart in turmoil, those demure lips told nothing of its suffering" — that could apply to any number of her characters.

But Huppert says she nev-

er thought of portraying Emma and that it would have been vain of her to do so. She simply was offered the role by Director Claude Chabrol, with whom she worked on *Violette* and *Story Of Women*, and agreed to take it on.

"I read the book and I had a nice feeling when I read the book," she said. "I found out everybody had preconceived ideas about the character. I found I had the chance to take the dust off the character and create this kind of new Madame Bovary."

"I didn't take any incredible liberty with the part. I played the part the way it is written. I think she is very vivid and very active, and is

contrary to what people think Madame Bovary is, which is very passive and very boring. She's full of life, she pursues her desires."

It is here that actress and character seem to merge. Huppert, born in Paris in 1955, decided at an early age she wanted to act and was just 16 when she made her feature debut. She was soon making one movie after another, her directors included Chabrol, Jean-Luc Godard, Bertrand Blier and Diane Kurys.

In one of her early films, the international hit *Going Places*, she plays a bored teenager who runs off with a pair of male vagabonds and their female companion. It is easy to spot her. Her hair is

thicker and her face rounder, but there is the same weary, "I've seen it all" look in her eyes, the same sense she's biding time until something more interesting comes along.

"I didn't decide I would be like this," she said, "like Victor Hugo writes about Jean Valjean's mind in *Les Misérables*: A big tempest in the skull. I have this skull and people see the tempest."

If there is one major difference between Huppert and Emma, it's the role fantasy plays in their lives. Emma believed in "A marvellous world where all was passion, ecstasy, delirium," a separate, but imaginary existence that for a time provided an escape from her unhappy

marriage.

But Huppert says any inventing she does is for her part only. She internalises her characters, but doesn't become them off screen. Acting is not a way for her to create a new life, but to enrich the one she's already leading.

"I never felt cinema was such a fairy tale for me. I did not go meet somebody who told me, 'you are going to be a great movie star,' she said.

"When people say they are going into some other people's life, they say they believe that they are who they play. I'm always myself and the more I make movies, the more I am myself. I'm just being myself, which is good enough for me."



Isabelle Huppert

Hollywood's year ends with bang, but not enough bucks

By John Horn

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Hollywood had its best holiday week in history, but ticket sales for 1991 were down, production costs soared and some studios stood on the brink.

The hits *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* and *The Silence Of The Lambs* ended the year box-office rich but studio-poor. Even 4-week-old *Hook*, with \$82 million in grosses, has yet to make a penny.

Due to the \$70 million film's complicated contract with director Steven Spiel-

berg and stars Dustin Hoffman and Robin Williams, the pirate epic must gross about \$130 million at domestic theatres to make a profit, according to sources.

Final figures were not available for the Christmas-New Year's week, but it surpassed the holiday record of \$209.4 million set during the

Fourth of July week in 1989. For all of last year, North American theatre owners sold an estimated \$4.85 billion in tickets, down about 3 per cent from the \$5 billion for each of the last two years.

Admissions were off more sharply, but returns were offset by higher ticket prices, as high as \$7.50 in some markets. Had it not been for the Christmas showing, the year-end returns would have been much worse.

"It's been a terrible year for movies," said Jon Avnet, director of the well-received film *Fried Green Tomatoes*.

"People are sick of the junk that's been put out there." Several high-profile films, released late in the year to be fresh in Oscar voters' minds, performed strongly. They included *The Prince Of Tides*, *Bugsy*, *JFK*, *Cape Fear* and, in limited release, *Fried Green Tomatoes* and *Grand Canyon*.

The popularity of these critically acclaimed titles suggested filmmakers were avoid-

ing theatres not because of the recession but because there were so many lousy movies.

"It always comes down to product," said Sid Ganis, executive vice president of Sony Pictures Entertainment, parent of Tristar and Columbia Pictures.

Where the industry faltered was in soaring production costs — an average of \$26.7 million per movie in 1991, up \$7.7 million in three years.

Carolco Pictures had the year's No. 1 hit in *Terminator 2*, which grossed \$204.3 million, but the film cost a staggering \$95 million. Carolco is now on the verge of collapse and has laid off a fourth of its staff.

Orion Pictures stitched together \$130.7 million from *The Silence Of The Lambs*, good for third-best of the year. The studio is now in bankruptcy proceedings.

The year's top 10 films were *Terminator 2*, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger;

Kevin Costner's *Robin Hood: Prince Of Thieves*; *The Silence Of The Lambs* starring Jodie Foster; *City Slickers*, *Sleeping With The Enemy*, *The Addams Family*, *The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell Of Fear*, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret Of The Ooze*, *Backdraft* and *Hotshots*.

The year's most profitable films often were made on the cheap. *Boyz n the Hood* cost Columbia just \$6 million to film and collected more than \$57 million. *The Julia Roberts thriller Sleeping With The Enemy* was made by 20th Century Fox for \$20 million; it grossed slightly more than \$100 million. Warner Bros. produced *New Jack City* for \$8.5 million and it had ticket sales of \$45 million.

The industry's biggest moneymaker probably will be the Walt Disney Co.'s *Beauty And The Beast*. The animated film cost about \$25 million and is on line to gross around \$120 million.

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton and Edward Furlong in *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*.

Pavarotti — still on a tightrope after 30 years

By Paul Majendie

Reuter

DUBLIN — Even after 30 years of performing with a voice fans say was made in heaven, Luciano Pavarotti still feels like a tightrope walker in the circus.

"I think it's the tension that the tenor creates. Your voice is taken to the limit and gives the impression that it could crack at any moment," said Pavarotti in the programme for his final 1991 performance staged in Dublin this week.

"It's like going to the circus and watching the tightrope walker. The atmosphere is very, very tense as to what is going to happen, as with the voice of the tenor," he said.

Pavarotti, 56, who has popularised opera beyond his own wildest dreams, was in

Dublin to mark the end of the city's year as European capital of culture.

A capacity audience of 7,000 filled the concert hall and the music was piped free to a giant screen in the city centre where 20,000 revellers cheered and quaffed hot Irish whiskey.

Pavarotti, whose childhood dream was to become a professional footballer, is very proud of the common touch now given to an art form once hardened by an elitist image.

"When I began, I always hoped to bring more people to the opera. I think I have succeeded," he said.

"When I was a kid, I was never able to go to the opera, first because I didn't have the money and secondly I was never directed to the arts."

"In those days, the opera was only for those with

money. I think music is for everyone, it is a social service, an international language. It doesn't matter where you go.

"We went to China and everybody understood O Sole Mio, La Donna Mobile and Nessun Dorma like we do here, exactly the same."

Pavarotti has a soft spot for Dublin where as a 28-year-old tenor he sang the part of the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* in one of his first appearances outside Italy.

In jovial and relaxed form when he met journalists for a brief Dublin news conference, the maestro was quick to acknowledge that debt.

"It was one of the first theatres I had the pleasure to visit and from here I went to Covent Garden in London and my international career took off."

He also pointed to similarities between the Irish and the Italians.

"We are very similar. This is absolutely true. I think we have the heart. Some people would say we do before thinking. Sometimes you pay for that but it is always beautiful."

Pavarotti, a keen rider, shares the Irish passion for horses and was keeping a sharp eye out for a bargain during his Dublin trip because "when Irish horses are good, they are the best."

But there is always a hefty price to pay. "This is the Olympic year so any horse costing \$100,000 will go up to \$300,000 and if I go there myself, it is going to cost \$600,000. If you have a gift to give to me..."

Pavarotti's spirited rendition of *Nessun Dorma* be-

came the unofficial theme song for last year's soccer World Cup finals in Italy and topped the pop charts in Britain.

He also combined with



Luciano Pavarotti

Jose Carreras and Placido Domingo to give a memorable concert at Rome's Baths of Caracalla which has since become an international best-seller on tape and video.

What are Pavarotti's ambitions for 1992?

"1992 is an Olympic year. I think we should all of us in our profession be Olympic. I feel that I am going to be the best that I can for 1992."

He will also be checking in to a health farm to shed several pounds from his hefty bulk. "It is not a question of health, it is a question of feeling better if you are losing weight."

Then, as he scooped up some ice and almost ruefully plunked it in his glass, he said: "That is why I will be drinking water for the next few days instead of a nice Irish coffee with a lot of whiskey."

Sosa — Argentina's most-enduring folk singer

By John Wright

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — When Mercedes Sosa sings, she exposes her heart.

When the woman nicknamed "the voice of the Americas" opens her mouth, she pours the authority of one who has suffered repression, poverty and overwhelming sadness.

During a recent performance at New York's Lincoln Centre, Argentines swayed to her rhythms while waving their sky blue-and-white flag.

With a bombo — a large Andean drum — under her arm, Sosa beat Latin American rhythms while unleashing her powerful contralto. On some tunes, she shook a guiro, a dried gourd filled with pebbles.

Her talent lies in express-

ing a song's emotions with her powerful, earthy voice.

After playing in Europe, Sosa exhibited her wide repertoire during a tour of 10 U.S. and Canadian cities, playing old standards as well as songs from her latest album, *De Mi (From Me)*.

"A flowing current of blood, a silenced people," she belted out in *Retratos* (Portraits), a song about the violent coup that toppled Chile's elected leftist government in 1973.

She stopped singing and whispered "Disappeared" on stage, to emphasise the more than 2,000 Chileans killed by Gen. Augusto Pinochet's soldiers for political reasons.

In 1978, police arrested Sosa, her 20-year-old son, her band and 350 fans. She later abandoned her home-

land, as did thousands of other Argentines, under pressure by the military government. For many years, Argentines dared not utter the lyrics of her songs.

"The police grabbed me and searched my body in public," she recalled in an interview, her voice quavering. "They humiliated me."

"They really persecuted me. It was absurd how they punished me right after the death of my husband," she said.

"La Guerra Sucia" (The Dirty War) between the military government and leftist terrorists polarised Argentine politics in the 1970s. Groups such as the Montoneros and the *Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo* (People's Revolutionary Army) began armed in-

surgencies against the right-wing government.

"I don't belong to any political party," said Sosa.

She conceded being sympathetic to leftist causes but denied ever being a revolutionary, despite the Montoneros using her *La Arribena* (The Place Up There) as a signal for attacks.

"I never sided with the Montoneros. I didn't agree with killing the military or with killing anyone," she said. "I favour dialogue, talking out differences."

Her arrest came while performing *Cuando Tenga La Tierra* (When They Have Land) — a call for agrarian reform. Other concerts were cancelled because of bomb threats. The government banned her performances.

Her music barred from the

airways, Sosa fled the following year. She lived in France and Spain for three years before returning home — to see the generals humiliated by their loss in the Falkland Islands war and relinquish power to civilians.

Still, a measure of sadness and pain lingers.

A large, round 56-year-old woman with chiseled features, straight black hair and high cheekbones, Sosa cuts a commanding figure. Her South American Indian heritage is reflected in her music, face and dress. She's fond of bright, colourful scarves popular in the Andes.

Her most-beloved tune — *Gracias A La Vida* (Thanks to Life) isn't political, rather it's a celebration of life.

Sosa grew up in Argenti-

na's northwestern, sugar-growing province of Tucuman, in view of the majestic, snow-draped Andes.

"We were very poor but very united," she said, explaining how her early poverty engendered a lifelong commitment to the poor.

After singing professionally for 40 years, Sosa complains about not having enough time with her two grandchildren but has no plans to retire.

"I live for music," she explained.

Her philosophy and life could best be summed up in "Zamba Para no Morir" (song to not die).

"If the singer falls silent, life itself falls silent, because my entire life is a song. If the singer falls silent... hope, light and happiness all die."

Missouri town gains as country music tourist centre

By Pat Harris

Reuter

BRANSON, Missouri — A strip of highway in the rugged Ozark Mountains nearly 800 kilometres west of Nashville is twanging into its own as a new centre for fans eager to see live performances of country music stars.

While Nashville has long billed itself as "Music City USA" because of its prominence as the centre of the country music recording industry, this small southeast Missouri town has seen explosive growth in the past few years.

In fact, with 27 theatres and nearly 44,000 seats devoted solely to music, Branson claims to have attracted more than 4 million visitors in 1990. By comparison, Nashville's premiere attraction, Opryland USA Theme Park, had only 2.1 million.

The main strip of Branson has earned the nickname "the Broadway of Country Music." Country music stars Mel Tillis, Roy Clark, Mickey Gilley, Jim Stafford, Boxcar Willie, Moe Bandy and Ray Stevens have built their own theatres and appear up to eight months of the year.

Country music's royal family, Johnny Cash and June Carter Cash, announced that they will lend their name to a 2,500-seat complex where they will give at least 75 performances a year.

The lure of the place for country music performers is obvious. Rather than grinding out months of one-night stands on tour, the stars can stay in Branson and let an average 28,000 car loads of fans come to them every day.

"It's great," says Grammy winner Danny Davis, leader of the Nashville Brass.

"In the past, I've been on the road constantly except for sit-down gigs in Las Vegas or Lake Tahoe. It costs \$3 a mile to run one tour bus — insurance, maintenance costs, fuel and so on. Here, the audience comes to us."

"I can make more money than I did touring and still get out and play golf almost every day."

Cash put it succinctly in announcing plans for his theatre: "We're tired of putting in a million miles a year."

Over the past few months, Branson has developed a high media profile as city folk discovered it, but the development of this music paradise dates back to the 1950s when two enterprising brothers, Jack and Pete Herschend, took a 99-year-lease on a tract of land that included a large cave.

Until the Herschends brothers installed electric

lights and a cable car system, Marvel Cave primarily had been known as a century-old site for the mining of *Bat Guano*.

While the Herschends expected their square dances in the cave to be the main attraction, it soon became clear that the abandoned mining town at the top of the cave was the lure for tourists.

The buildings were restored and the brothers created a theme park called Silver Dollar City.

Silver Dollar City features homespun attractions such as wood carvers and basket weavers at work, an old steam engine and a country store. Razzle-dazzle entertainment consists of heaving water-filled balloons at the Sheriff.

In 1960, with the park drawing about 50,000 people a year, a country music group called the Baldknobbers started performing regular shows.

"I give Silver Dollar City all the credit," said Jim Mabe, a member of the Baldknobbers. "Silver Dollar City started the people coming here. It's still the drawing card, and it always will be."

Another country music group, the Lloyd Presley Band, arrived in 1967. Two more — the Plummer Family and the Foggy River Boys — came in the early 1970s and Branson was on its way.

According to the Ozark Marketing Council, a group formed to promote Branson and surrounding attractions, 6.5 million tickets were sold to music shows in Branson in 1990.

Visitors spend an estimated \$625 million a year. The overall Ozark entertainment economy is estimated at \$1.5 billion. And it will only get bigger.

About \$100 million in new construction is scheduled in 1992. In addition to the Johnny Cash Theatre, Mel Tillis plans to open a 2,000-seat theatre and there are plans for a 4,000-seat Grand Palace and a showboat on a nearby lake.

Nashville, with attractions including the Country Music Hall of Fame and Grand Ole Opry, still draws more tourists — about 6.9 million in 1990, according to its chamber of commerce. But it is keenly aware of its Missouri competition.

"We're in competition with entertainment areas everywhere, including Branson," said Tom Adkinson, a spokesman for Opryland USA. "But the way we look at it, anything that promotes country music is good for us."

No ghouls, no betel juice for Malaysia's babies

By Heidi Munan

KUALA LUMPUR. Malaysia — Malaysia's success story when it comes to infant care shows that well-anchored traditions don't always stifle change.

Prenatal care is an old concept here. Expectant mothers are cared for, pampered — and hampered. Traditionally, a pregnant woman may not kill, tie or mangle anything. Disregard of this taboo may result in a deformed baby, ancient rules say. She can't cut or sew cloth. Some communities restrict her diet; she eats rice and fish without sour, spicy, juicy or "cold" additions like vegetables and fruit.

A pregnant woman's husband is not allowed to kill or

tie animals either, to nail or lash timber, to block holes or dam little rivers. And he is responsible for protecting his wife from danger, envy, malice and ghosts. Evil spirits lurk invisibly in the jungle, air and water. One really unpleasant ghoulish tradition drifts about at dusk, eagerly slobbering for a woman with child. The canny husband plants a pineapple under his house; the spiky leaf will catch this revolting specter by its entrails so it cannot make its way up the steps.

Childbirth is strictly a woman's affair. The midwife rules supreme, aided and abetted by mother or mother-in-law. If labour lasts too long, father can help by uncovering jars, opening doors

and windows, untying knots in the house. In a really desperate case, all the boats at the jetty are set adrift. Sympathetic magic opens the womb and moves the baby.

Traditionally, the umbilical cord is cut with a bamboo sliver. The midwife mumbles a charm while she chews betelnut and spits it all over the squirming body. Mother and infant are anointed with spices to warm them (daytime temperatures are 28-33 degrees Centigrade) and keep off "wind". Washed and swaddled, a Muslim baby is handed to the father, who says the Call to Prayer into the tiny ear.

If the baby is born into an Indian family, the father will pace up and down outside the labour room with a good watch in his hand. Knowing the exact minute of the birth is vital information for the family astrologer.

Once baby is safely delivered, the mother must be confined. It is a moot point whether the custom was passed to the Malays from the Chinese, to the Indians from the Malays, or to the Chinese from the Malays. For 16 to 44 days the new mother is not allowed to leave the house, hardly the bed. A really good midwife bandages her patient's legs together! A tight wrap supposedly will help to restore the young woman's figure. Doors and windows are shut because any air current is bad for mother and baby. Mother-in-law keeps up steady supplies of kachang-ma — chicken soup stewed in rice wine and herbs. This concoction is said to warm the mother; it probably keeps her mildly inebriated and placid through the potentially turbulent postnatal period.

Do Malaysian women put up with the full rigours of this regimen? Some do just to please the old ladies, others shrug it all off as old-fashioned nonsense and are back at work when they please. Government officers get 42 days of maternity

leave; few spend this period supping on kachang-ma in semi-darkness. Manual workers get four weeks leave before and four after the birth of a baby; many resume work as soon as possible to supplement the household finances. Confinement pampering is in direct proportion to a family's means!

A Malay baby is given a name on the seventh day, when a few strands of hair are cut. Rice paste and rose water are dabbed on the child's forehead. Tastes of betelnut juice, honey and salt are applied to his tongue so that he may "speak eloquently before princes with a sweet voice, that his words may be as tasty as betelnut and as effective as salt."

Chinese friends visit a new mother with gifts: Money wrapped in red paper, chicken for the kachang-ma, baby clothes (the mother was not supposed to make any while she was expecting) or, if the infant is a boy, little items of gold.

Today, most Malaysian babies are born in hospitals or with the assistance of trained midwives. Traditional midwives attend courses organised by the Ministry of Health; they are taught basic principles of hygiene and warned of the dangers of unsafe obstetric practices. "We're not trying to weed out all customs," a ministry official explains, "only those which harm mother or child."

Horror tales abound of the old ways of delivery and postnatal care. In extreme cases, attempts were made to push the baby out by standing on the mother's abdomen. "Wise women" tried to change the position of an unborn baby by vigorous massage. Newly delivered mothers were made to sit in front of a small fire for days to "dry out the womb." Some elderly women still carry the burn scars of this torture on their backs.

Betel-spitting is strongly discouraged for hygienic reasons. Umbilical cords

often festered under the traditional tumeric dressing. Now village midwives have no objection to disinfectant once they have been taught how to use it. These women may be competent to attend a normal birth if the mother prefers the surroundings of her own home. Their main function, however, is to recognise a difficult case, and refer it to the hospital.

Government-provided medical facilities are available to 100 per cent of the mothers in West Malaysia and about 80 per cent in East Malaysia. They do use them: Rural mothers travel long distances for prenatal examination and to bring their babies for check-ups and immunisation at regular intervals.

In the inaccessible mountains of Borneo, flying doctors bring medical care to a scattered population. Mother and child health care is one of the primary concerns of this service: Although the doctor may make a few deliveries, he mostly examines mothers, babies and toddlers on each routine visit.

Rural health teams also crisscross the countryside by boat, by landrover, and even by foot. During a regular monthly visit to one village, Regina, a team member, weighs and vaccinates the babies. The mothers who are familiar with the health team's record charts are eager to know whether their little ones have gained. They compare notes, and the "gainers" then feel free to offer good advice to the "stayers." During a talk on eating healthy foods, Regina casts a stern glance at two little girls who are sucking on

candies, and admonishes: "Don't give children sweets until they have had their rice, vegetables and fish. Look at a toddler's teeth to see whether he is eating a healthy diet. You build a baby's body with proper feeding, you make him sick with improper feeding."

After the talk, Regina, herself the mother of four, introduced a new baby food, a meal made of pounded rice grains, mung beans and pounded dried fish that is boiled with water to make a kind of porridge. Says Regina: "I cook it for my little ones, it's quite tasty. The bean and fish meal give it flavour as well as extra protein." The traditional diet for babies and toddlers was simply a rice-and-water gruel, with no food value.

Government statistics bear out the success of Malaysia's child health system: Infant mortality has declined from 24 per 1000 in 1980 to 12.6/1000 in 1990. By comparison, infant mortality rates in neighbouring countries are: In Indonesia 65/1000, in Thailand 24/1000, and in Singapore 7/1000.

Child care doesn't stop with the midwife and the rural nurse. Each child is nutritionally assessed when he starts school; supplementary meals are provided for underweight children. Those who missed out in infancy are vaccinated. The dental nurse is a familiar feature in the larger primary schools.

At 2.3 per cent, Malaysia's population growth is large for a fast developing country. "Too large," sniffs a Filipino sociologist: "Unskilled



Although she is blissfully unaware, this Malaysian toddler is the beneficiary of a successful government programme to provide prenatal and postnatal care to all women and their babies.

labour is knocking at the door, but Malaysia prefers to breed her own." A recent relaxation of procedures allows a controlled influx of labour from neighbouring countries, but many Malaysians remain suspicious of workers who were "illegals" only a few months ago.

Parents eager to produce a boy don't need the official encouragement for large families. Poor parents may even give up the latest female arrival for adoption, and try again. Gender discrimination is not as blatant as it used to be, but many Malay-Chinese families still prefer boys. The

theory is that a boy will support his aged parents, while the expense of rearing a daughter will only benefit her in-laws.

The official view supports equality of the sexes. The education of all Malaysian children includes, besides biology and hygiene, a "Family Studies" syllabus that prescribes simple budgeting, personal relations and group interaction. "We teach them to think as persons, not boys and girls," an education officer explains. In "Living Skills" courses, both sexes learn cooking and basic household repairs.

Study confirms safety of fetal ultrasound

LONDON (AP) — Ultrasound, routinely used to examine fetuses early in pregnancy when the brain is developing, does not increase the likelihood of children developing learning disabilities or dyslexia, a Norwegian study says.

The study, published in a recent issue of *Lancet*, a British medical journal, compared children who had been exposed to ultrasound in the womb to those who had not. Investigators found no difference in the two groups' performance on school tests by age 8, nor in the rate of dyslexia by age 9.

"This should be reassuring

news to women, many of whom have expressed concern over the hazards of ultrasound on the fetus," said Dr. Kjell Salvesen, the leading investigator at the University of Trondheim in Norway.

He said a previous study by American researchers in 1984 had shown a possible link between fetal ultrasound and dyslexia, but many doctors considered this a statistical fluke.

Dr. Joshua A. Copel, an obstetrician-gynecologist at Yale University, said the Norwegian researchers are well-respected for their studies of the use of ultrasound

during pregnancy.

"This study confirms what we've been thinking. We keep hearing the same thing — that no one has been able to find an adverse effect of ultrasound," Dr. Copel said.

Norwegian investigators analysed data of children born between 1979 and 1981 to mothers who had participated in other studies of ultrasound. In one group of 1,015 children, 92 per cent had been exposed to ultrasound between the 16th and 22nd weeks of pregnancy. In the other group, 81 per cent of 996 children had never been exposed to ultrasound, Dr. Salvesen said the slight

overlap in ultrasound exposure did not influence results.

Tests for reading comprehension, oral reading, spelling, arithmetic and overall school performance given during the second year of primary school, ages 7 or 8, showed no differences between the two groups of children, said Dr. Salvesen.

Among a subset of children tested during the third year of primary school, ages 8 and 9, investigators found that ultrasound did not increase the risk of dyslexia — 21 of 309 who were exposed to ultrasound were dyslexic compared to 26 of 294 who were not exposed.

Researchers hopeful about cystic fibrosis treatment

WASHINGTON (AP) — Researchers say they may have found a way to treat cystic fibrosis, a disease that has always been fatal. If the genetic therapy works in monkeys, human tests will start soon.

The development delighted some researchers involved in the long fight against the disease, and one expert in the field said that if the method works it could mean cystic fibrosis would kill no more.

"We believe that this provides us with the unique opportunity to reverse the course of the disease," said Dr. Robert Beall, executive vice president of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. "If this can work in humans we have the potential to stop the deaths caused by this disease."

Dr. Beall, a biochemist who directed research at the National Institutes of Health, now oversees the foundation's medical and scientific programmes.

Patients might simply use inhalers to get the genetically altered cold virus into their lungs and reverse the abnormalities that cause the disease. But it's not known how long the treatment is effective, and patients may have to repeat it periodically.

"It would not be a one-time cure, but the strategy is a cure," said Dr. Ronald Crystal, head of the research team at the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute.

So far, the researchers have successfully used the method in test tubes and have tried it on rats. The results were published in the scientific publication *Cell*.

"I have no doubt that if we were to do the same now in a person with cystic fibrosis that we could... reverse the abnormalities in the lung," Dr. Crystal said in an interview.

Cystic fibrosis, an inherited disorder that affects some 40,000 people in the United States, causes the lungs to produce a thick mucus that eventually damages the lungs and leads to respiratory failure and death. The average age at death is 27, Dr. Crystal said.

Until recently, little could be done for cystic fibrosis patients except to help them cough the mucus out of their lungs.

But there are new treatments that alter or reduce the secretions in the lungs, said Dr. Beall. Crystal's approach represents the first attack on the underlying genetic cause of cystic fibrosis, Dr. Beall said.

Altered gene therapy usually involves taking cells from the body, changing them and putting them back. But the inside of the lung is too complicated for such a procedure.

"The idea has been obvious," Dr. Crystal said. "The problem technically has been doing it."

Dr. Crystal's team altered a common cold virus to carry the cystic fibrosis gene into the lungs of test rats. "We modified it so that it cannot cause damage," Dr. Crystal said.

The lungs pick up the correct gene, which instructs the cells in the lining to produce the right kind of protein. That protein, in turn, ensures that the abnormal transfers of sodium and chloride that cause the thick mucus don't occur.

"The animals now express this normal human gene in their lungs and the gene is making the normal protein," Dr. Crystal said, adding that the corrected gene was present in the rats six weeks after being injected.

But Dr. Beall said treatment may have to be repeated because lung cells are replaced every 60-80 days. Dr. Crystal said he didn't know how much such therapy

would cost.

Dr. Crystal and his colleagues conducted a similar experiment on an inherited form of emphysema and got similar results, which they published last spring.

While the researchers and the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation are encouraged with the results, there are still hurdles to be cleared. Putting a virus in the lung can be risky because it could, for example, cause pneumonia, Dr. Crystal said.

That didn't happen in any of the rats. Trials on monkeys will begin in a couple of weeks and human trials could follow within 12 to 18 months, Dr. Beall said.

"This is a potential therapy that could restore these people to normal health, and that's what we want for our CF patients," Dr. Beall said. Researchers also are trying to identify the ultimate source of the disease. The cells that produce the cell they're now able to alter, if you can fix those, "then you've got the ultimate cure," Dr. Beall said.

Cystic fibrosis research and success have been rapid since the discovery of the genetic defect 2 1/2 years ago, Dr. Crystal said.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

HIDDEN FOOD CACHE

By Valentine Baras

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Jordan, EC review peace process

(Continued from page 1)

goodwill and seriousness in the peace negotiations.

One of the key themes for the latest Middle East swing of Mr. Van den Broek, who has had extensive experience in dealing with the various dimensions of the Arab-Israeli conflict, is exploring "practical ways through which the EC could help the peace process," said a European diplomat.

The diplomat, preferring anonymity, recalled that the community has expressed its willingness to extend "material help in a manner that would consolidate (expected) Arab-Israeli peace agreements and nurture the atmosphere of coexistence and cooperation in the Middle East."

Mr. Van den Broek's visit to the region comes ahead of the

multilateral phase of Middle East peace talks scheduled to be held in Moscow on Jan. 28 and 29. The EC is one of the participants in the gathering, which will discuss regional issues such as water, the environment, disarmament, regional cooperation, refugee problems etc.

In an arrival statement, the Dutch minister referred to the multilateral talks and underlined the importance of the expected discussions at the forum by reaffirming that the EC was motivated to help the peace process since it was convinced that the people of the Middle East sought peace.

"At the present stage of negotiations in the Middle East peace process, we feel it is of utmost opportunity to learn from the Jordanian authorities how

they view the developments here and how they see the further role of Europe, how we can together try to further the process, which we know is in a difficult stage," Mr. Van den Broek said.

"What we see and what we learn is that there is a great need for turning from procedures to the substantive matters of the negotiating process," the minister said in reply to a question how he assessed the progress of the Arab-Israeli peace talks so far.

The EC maintains close contacts with the parties involved and was asked to help, to try to give an impetus to bring things forward," he said. "I will also be visiting Israel. Of course, we will be hearing their viewpoints as well and try to encourage them to take certain bold steps... so that we avoid the stagnation of the process."

"I think the world, the region

in the first place with the world, may not miss this realistic chance for peace now," he added.

According to diplomatic sources, the EC is seeking to closely familiarise itself with the ideas and concepts of the various Middle East parties with a view to finalising its position and response to specific proposals as and when brought up at the multilateral forum in Moscow and how it could contribute to ensuring that the multilateralists help the bilateralists succeed.

"Cooperation is the key word that the EC is looking for," said one Western diplomat. "If there is a will in the region that it is the destiny of the people here to live together and avert instability and turmoil, then the rest of the players will fall in line."

"The EC is definitely one of those players and will play its role in full," he added.

European diplomats maintain

that the EC member states, collectively as well as individually, were instrumental in convincing Israel as well as Syria to endorse the American-led peace process.

At one stage, members of the European Parliament demanded that Israel's trade privileges with EC member countries be linked directly with progress in the peace efforts.

Mr. Van den Broek leaves for Israel Thursday. In his talks with Israeli leaders, he is expected to voice the EC's rejection of some of the practices of the occupation power against the Palestinian people and urge the Jewish state to curb its settlement activities and reverse its recent decision to expel 12 Palestinians.

Mr. Van den Broek will then travel to Lisbon to brief his Portuguese counterpart on the results of his mission. Portugal took over the rotating collective presidency of the EC from the Netherlands on Jan. 1.

Baker's hidden hand

By Rowland Evans and Robert Novak

Washington Post

SECRETARY of State James A. Baker's steadily increasing pressure on Israel over new loan guarantees has succeeded in weakening the alliance between Israel and the American Jewish community and splitting hawks and doves among U.S. Jewish leaders.

Mr. Baker is keeping his bottom line a closely held secret. That creates suspense in Israel and anxiety here, with unusual results. Leaders of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee told Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir in Jerusalem late last month that they had decided against political confrontation with the Bush administration on the loan-guarantee issue. They want no repetition of September's defeat at the hands of an angry President Bush, strongly backed by American voters.

Instead, they warned Mr. Shamir to ease up on his policy of pell-mell construction of new settlements in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza. Mr. Shamir listened but, as reported by the Washington Jewish Week, "acted disdainfully." His attitude ran counter to Jewish concerns here that even with the political pressures of the presidential campaign, there will be no loans until the building spree stops.

This puts Mr. Baker and his boss in a strong position. Either Mr. Shamir will accept Mr. Baker's eventual terms on the settlements vs. loan question or he will forfeit billions that Israel wants

U.S. taxpayers to guarantee to take care of the flood of Russian immigrants. If he does the former, he gets the loans; if the latter, he antagonizes hundreds of thousands of new Jewish immigrants — jobless, homeless and soon-to-be voters — plus widening the gap with his essential U.S. base. That would probably weaken his chances in the Israeli election later this year.

American Jewish leaders have never been close to unanimity on U.S. support or lack of it for Israel's handling of the tortuous Palestine question, but the split seems sharper today. Disturbed by reports that Mr. Shamir's conduct was costing Israel Jewish support here, several high-ranking but hard-line American Jewish leaders arranged a session with White House Chief of Staff Sam Skinner last week.

Among many uninvited was Henry Siegman, influential president of the American Jewish Congress. The hard-liners did not want the moderate views held by Mr. Siegman and many others aired at the White House.

But Mr. Baker is unimpressed by attempts to pressure the White House. His policy in concealing U.S. conditions for the loan guarantees was described by an administration source not close to the secretary as "brilliant diplomacy" for dealing with Israel.

In the past, Israel has often known the precise direction of U.S. policy even before congressional leaders. Keeping Mr. Shamir in the dark blocks counteraction by denying him a clear target. One Israeli official has told us Israel for the last month has been "almost begging" the

United States to reveal its conditions but has learned nothing. So far this success has been purely tactical. What Mr. Baker plans next, probably within 30 days, is to unveil his long-term strategy: how to limit the loan guarantees to humanitarian and economic help for immigrants while preventing a single dollar from being spent on West Bank settlements.

A U.S. satellite was recently positioned for close reconnaissance over the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza. Its photography, routinely transmitted to Washington and the desks of Baker's Middle East advisers, is forming a database of highly accurate information on the full extent of new roads and settlements now under construction, much of it with the illegal use of U.S. aid.

Administration sources say it appears to be Mr. Baker's current intention to use this database as a key component of the strategic plan he will soon propose. Inform Mr. Shamir that completion of projects actually started, all of them identified by satellite photography, will be allowed but all new starts will be banned. Excluded would be additions to the vast network of highways designed to split ancient Arab villages from new Jewish towns.

This or something close to it is the way Mr. Baker intends to play his hand on setting loan conditions. When he does, his diplomatic stealth in holding his cards so close will give him maximum leverage for preventing a Shamir bolt. That shows the effectiveness of Mr. Baker's divide-and-conquer strategy.

Breaking the impasse took compromises

(Continued from page 1)

Furthermore, it was agreed that there would be no plenary meetings for the joint delegation, but merely "General Meetings" of delegates, which can only "discuss" procedure and matters that do not exclusively pertain to one track. The number of Palestinian delegates attending the "General Meeting" would be less than either the Jordanians and the Israelis but the combined strength of the Arab delegates present would exceed that of Israel by over a third.

"The Arab side, mainly the Palestinians, agreed to 40 per cent of the Israeli terms; or the Israelis agreed to 40 per cent of Arab conditions," an Arab delegate said. "It is possible that the ratio was 60 to 40 to either side."

the delegate continued. "But this is besides the point. What is really important is that both sides made compromises in order to reach targets they set for themselves."

For their part, the Palestinians wanted to move on to substantive negotiations as early as possible; and, in the words of spokesperson Hanan Ashrawi, they were prepared to leave the "procedural" squabble to a technical committee to solve while talks on such important issues as settlements and the transitional period of Palestinian self-government proceeded in parallel.

The Palestinians' keenness to get on with substantive talks was easily understandable, indeed legitimate, in view of the fact that the Israelis were clearly trying to prevent the negotiations from reaching the stage of discussing settlements — a highly sensitive issue for Israel, both internally and in its relations with the U.S.

Palestinian negotiators had reasoned that the top priority for them was to stop Israeli settlement building in the occupied territories, and they were not going to let procedure, no matter how closely it was tied to substance, stand in the way of "exposing Israeli intentions and practices" on settlements. The future of the request for \$10 billion in loan guarantees from the U.S. Arab delegates maintained, largely dependent on settlement activity (see Vass and Novak article), and it was in the Palestinians' best interest to discuss the issue while in Washington and before the Bush administration and U.S. Congress decided on a response to the request.

In order to link the loan guarantees with the continued building of settlements, which the Americans oppose, the Palestinians were willing to set aside the differences over representation, even though they and the Jordanians had been convinced that it was not a question of procedure for them.

Furthermore, the Palestinian negotiators were coming under pressure from both the U.S. administration and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) leaderships to yield on the issue of the recognition for the joint delegation, since it is enshrined in the letters of assurances and invitations, and not to dwell on the demand for independent Palestinian representation for now.

"The Palestinians were given all kinds of advice, and subjected to all sorts of pressures, to give up something for something that is more important," an Arab official said.

"But it is indeed not true that, by accepting the Monday formula, the Palestinians made concessions that could not be compensated for in the future," the official maintained.

The role of the PLO in the Palestinian decision to accept the accord is still not very clear to observers and analysts here, except perhaps for the belief that the presence in Washington of Chairman Yasser Arafat's adviser, Dr. Nabil Sabath, has "helped (the delegation) to be more pragmatic in its outlook and more coherent in its response to initiatives," as one well-informed Arab delegate put it. "Besides," the delegate said, "Arafat has just visited Cairo, and it is possible that (President Hosni) Mubarak played a role in convincing the PLO to drop its immediate insistence on representation in favour of entering Israel into discussing settlements and other important issues while their delegation remained in Washington."

While it was widely agreed here that the Palestinians, as the weaker party, in terms of holding political cards to play, had to accept compromises "in order to gain the most from the negotiations," observers and analysts were less in agreement why the Israelis offered the "concessions" they made on the issue of representation.

"I know for a fact that the Americans had put pressure on the Israelis to remove the 'procedural' obstacles from the part of negotiations and to get to the stage of substantive negotiations," said a

source close to the Israeli delegation. "It was not only the Palestinians who came under pressure from the Bush administration. The Israelis felt it too," the source added. His "information" was supported by other observers and Arab officials interviewed by the Jordan Times over the past two weeks.

Another theory advanced by pro-Israel lobbyists in Washington was that the Israelis conceded on the issue of representation because the Shamir government felt it could keep the Americans out of the negotiating process if it yielded on "procedure in this particular case."

Briefing reporters last week (before the negotiations resumed Monday), Martin Indyk, director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, which is largely perceived as front for AIPAC (American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee), explained the Israeli position in the following terms:

"From the Israeli side, I think that their desire was to keep the United States out. But that creates on its own an interesting calculation for them. In order to keep the United States out of the negotiations, they need to be able to show that they're actually making progress in the negotiations, even in very minor ways. Because then they can turn around to Washington and say, 'We don't need you engaged. We're doing just fine on our own, and it's much better if you don't become engaged.' And that pressure was clearly, that calculation, was clearly in their minds in the last round when they tried very hard to resolve the Shamir government's chances and the Palestinians and themselves. And they will try again, and probably succeed this time around, and then turn around to Washington and say, 'You see, it was much better for you not to intervene.'"

Moreover, Mr. Indyk said, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's best interests lay in keeping the bilateral talks going with neither breakdowns nor breakthroughs.

If the Arabs had walked out of the negotiations over the question of representation, Mr. Indyk indicated, the Shamir government's chances of being re-elected would be that much weakened by the step.

The Israelis might have decided to accept the two-track approach also because the request for the loan guarantees was coming up for debate between the administration and Congress very soon.

"Israel did not want to jeopardize its request by appearing intransigent in the talks," a State Department official said. "The Israelis should be interested in giving us the impression that they could and would contribute to a breakthrough."

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the letter would have been written well before Monday, when the agreement was announced.

Arab and other sources expected that the "positive" Israeli decision on Palestinian representation had partly come about as a result of the American Jewish pressure on the Likud government.

"Because leaders of the Jewish community basically support the negotiations and want Israel to get loan guarantees, they would have been against Shamir to badge on breaking the impasse over the issue of representation," a well-informed American observer said. "The settlement issue is also divisive (to the American Jews), and they would not have liked to add another controversial issue to the list of confrontation points between Israel and the U.S."

Add to all these theories that Israel's insistence on giving authority to the joint delegation is illegal or not called for in the letters of assurances and invitations, and the picture becomes clear, a source close to the Israeli delegation said. "The Israelis simply had to make the necessary concessions this time around."

This source "saw the picture," as he put it, also in the context of the Israeli decision to expel 12 Palestinians. "What the Israelis were basically telling the Americans," he said, "is that Israel more concerned about its security than about making concessions on the bargaining table. The Israelis were keen to get that message across to the Americans."

Jordan maintained a role supportive of the Palestinians throughout. "Our best interest, and the Palestinians' best interest, is in ensuring full Palestinian participation in the process," one senior Jordanian delegate said. "We did what we could to ensure that that goal is met."

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At one stage, members of the European Parliament demanded that Israel's trade privileges with EC member countries be linked directly with progress in the peace efforts.

Mr. Van den Broek leaves for Israel Thursday. In his talks with Israeli leaders, he is expected to voice the EC's rejection of some of the practices of the occupation power against the Palestinian people and urge the Jewish state to curb its settlement activities and reverse its recent decision to expel 12 Palestinians.

Mr. Van den Broek will then travel to Lisbon to brief his Portuguese counterpart on the results of his mission. Portugal took over the rotating collective presidency of the EC from the Netherlands on Jan. 1.

'Protest' settlements set up

(Continued from page 1)

The pro-Iranian Hizbollah-Palestine group said in a statement issued in Beirut that the attack was a signal to Israel and what it called Arab "defeatists."

On Wednesday, some 150 PFLP supporters marching through the West Bank town of Nablus claimed responsibility for the bus attack and two earlier ambushes that killed three settlers. Some marchers fired shots in the air, Arab reporters said.

Settlers drove trailers carrying mobile homes to five sites in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to set up new settlements.

In two cases, near the West Bank settlements of Givat and Dolev, troops blocked the unloading of the mobile homes, an army official said. The radio said 20 people involved in the attempt to set up a new settlement near Givat were questioned by police.

The army official said troops were under orders to avoid confrontations with settlers, but that the mobile homes would be removed eventually because they were set up without permits.

The settlers went ahead unhindered at three sites — near the Arab village of Biddo and at the site of a Jewish seminary at Hebron in the West Bank and near the Gaza Strip's Kfar Darom settlement.

Near Biddo, legislators Michael Eitan of Mr. Shamir's Likud bloc and Gula Cohen of the ultra-rightist Tebiya Party joined those setting up trailers.

Soldiers have removed caravans from the sites of most previous attacks. Israel's leading peace movement, Peace Now, demanded the army remove the mobile homes and Israel Radio said forces were preparing to

evacuate the settlers in Gaza. The defence ministry had already stopped the establishment of a settlement at the Gaza site two weeks ago.

Settlers hope that by expanding their presence they will make it difficult for Israel to give back occupied land in return for peace with the Arabs.

Hawikish Housing Minister Ariel Sharon, who has spearheaded the settlement

doom, said there were ways to eliminate "terror" in the territories.

"What is clear is that there will be no solution as long as this situation continues. If there will be a solution now, it will be without value. There are answers to eliminate this terror."

Israel has decided to expel 12 Palestinians following a recent spate of ambushes. Appeals against the expulsions, which have been condemned by U.S., are currently being heard.

Ikhwan see double-edged sword

(Continued from page 1)

"These are views advocated by the enemies of the Islamic movement here and in Algeria," according to Mr. Abu Chaneimah.

"The Ikhwan's attitude in Jordan has proved these assumptions to be groundless," he argued, recalling that similar allegations were made when the Ikhwan won one-third of the 80-seat parliament two years ago.

Many of the Ikhwan politicians here accept this argument but still fear that the movement's position will be reversed if it gains control of the government.

Furthermore, sources close to the various trends of the Islamic movement in Jordan say that disruption of the elections in Algeria has also reinforced long-held suspicions about democratic claims by the West and by Arab governments.

The Ikhwan and their supporters were already infuriated by the Western reaction to the FIS victory in the primary elections. "We are really perplexed by the Western definition of democracy," one prominent Ikhwan official maintained. "The West hails democracy and even goes to way under its banner. But when the Islamists win it is no longer democracy."

The official explained that the Western attitude was making difficult for the leadership to pursue a moderate line. He revealed in recent internal debates even some members of

the leadership were advocating a more militant position.

According to well-informed sources, there were pressures on the Ikhwan leadership to vote against the 1992 budget outright. The Ikhwan avoided a division by floating the movement's vote in Parliament.

Many analysts do not rule out divisions within the Ikhwan as the leadership struggles to maintain a conciliatory position with the government.

The leader of the influential Sudanese Ikhwan, Dr. Hassan Toubabi, admitted that there was a gap between the traditionalist leadership and the "Islamic popular consciousness."

In an interview with the London-based Al Quds newspaper conducted before the military takeover in Algeria, Dr. Toubabi predicted that the FIS victory of the Islamic trend was inevitable.

Dr. Toubabi, a graduate of both Harvard and Sorbonne, implied that all means, including military coups, were justified to ensure Islamic rule.

Political analysts here, however, believe that the Ikhwan's leadership in Jordan will not venture into any risk that could trigger a confrontation unless there was a serious breakdown by a younger and a more radical leadership.

But even if the Ikhwan were able to control and contain the movement, there are indications that the other smaller Islamic groups in the country were heartened by the FIS model.

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Israeli coalition

(Continued from page 1)

talks, U.S. President George Bush last September demanded a delay in consideration of the loan guarantees, which Israel wants to help settle a wave of 350,000 Soviet Jewish immigrants in the past three years.

Mr. Neeman said on television that he expected elections to result from his party's move and selection of more right-wing cabinet members who would oppose the peace talks.

"We hope that after elections there will be a chance for even a more nationalist government," he said.

Most polls have predicted that Mr. Shamir's right-wing Likud bloc would defeat the opposition Labour Party, leading to another coalition with small rightist and religious parties.

The current government, formed in June 1990 after the collapse of a Likud-Labour coalition, was considered the most right-wing in Israel's history.

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McEnroe meets Becker as 2 seeds fall at Australian Open

MELBOURNE (R) — Two seeds crashed out of the Australian Open Wednesday, one to a little-known Swede, while John McEnroe was to a third-round clash with defending champion Boris Becker.

The Australian-based Lars Anders Wahlgren, ranked a lowly 256th, provided the biggest shock by ousting 12th-seeded American Derrik Rostagno in straight sets. South Africa's 46th ranked Wayne Ferreira, who reached the fourth round last year where he lost to Becker, put out eighth-seeded Karel Novacek of Czechoslovakia in four sets.

Another leading American seed, David Wheaton, who picked up \$2 million for winning the Grand Slam Cup last month, was also close to a second-round exit, saving three match points in the fifth set against Sweden's Nicklas Kulti.

Wahlgren's unexpectedly easy win followed his five-set first-round defeat of top-20 ranked American Brad Gilbert.

Wahlgren, 25, who lives in Queensland, had not beaten a player in the top 100 over the last year.

"I saw my chance and it is not very often you have the chance to play and win against very good guys," he told reporters.

If he wins his third round match against Italy's Omar Camporese he will play an even better guy in fifth seed Ivan Lendl who had few problems beating Australia's lowly ranked Roger Rasheed.

Lendl, top-seed Stefan Edberg and third-seed Becker all had fairly easy straight-sets victories in their second round matches, with the German booked for a centre court clash with McEnroe Friday.

McEnroe, 32, welcomed back here this week for the first time since his exit in disgrace two years ago for bad behaviour, once again charmed the crowd in his four-set win over Muscovite Andrei Cherkasov.

McEnroe, who lost to Cherkasov in the first round of the 1991 French Open, played with touch and power against the sturdy number 21 to win 7-5 3-6 6-4 6-3. McEnroe, clearly forgiven for his indiscretions in 1990, acknowledged afterwards that he seemed to be the crowd favourite. "They cheer me better here than they do sometimes in New York," he said.

The American said he expected a great match against Becker. "I'll have to play my best tennis and get a little bit of luck."

Becker, who beat Italy's Gianluca Pozzi 7-5 7-6 6-2 in under an hour in the first round, was also ill at ease with the veteran's ability. "On a given day he can give you a lot of trouble, no doubt about it," Becker said.

McEnroe, seven times a Grand Slam winner who has indicated this will be his last year on the circuit, has won only once in seven tournament matches against Becker.

"He's at the top, the peak of his career. I wish in a sense I'd played him when I was playing better tennis but that's like crying

over spilt milk. Now it's look ahead and hope that I can beat him again before I stop playing," he said.

There were no surprises in the women's singles though defending champion Monica Seles had to fight to beat the aggressive Japanese number one Kimiko Date in straight sets, 6-2 7-5.

Number one Seles, hot favourite to win the title with the late withdrawal of Steffi Graf through illness, allowed Date to battle her way back in the second set 5-5 after being on match point and 5-2 down.

Seles tightened her game and forced a number of errors at the new from Date to take the match. "I knew she was going to be tough, she can beat some top players and she is a fighter," Seles said.

"I didn't lose my patience at (5-5) and I didn't get mad at myself ... On the key points I played a little better," she said.

Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain, the No. 4 seed, advanced with an efficient, speedy 6-1, 6-1 triumph over Sandrine Testud of France, while No. 6 Jana Novotna defeated Canadian Rene Almer 6-3, 6-2.

Ninth-seeded Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere of Switzerland also progressed to the third round with a 6-3, 6-3 win over Karina Haboudova of Czechoslovakia, as did No. 12 Anke Huber of Germany, a 6-0, 6-1 winner over Australian Michelle Jagard. Leila Meshki of Georgia,

seeded 13, ousted American Nicole Arendt 6-1, 6-2.

Seles is excited by the prospect of playing a match against former number one and veteran of the men's game Jimmy Connors.

Seles, top seed for the Australian Open, said the proposal for a game between the two had been floated in Europe.

"I would love to play as it would be a fun match — we both grunt," Seles 18, said.

Newspapers in Europe had reported that Connors, now 40 and winner of eight Grand Slam titles, had agreed to such a game, according to Seles.

"I was tempted but no-one came to me," she told reporters after her victory over Date.

"It would be a very high-level match ... I would go into it giving my best, he is still playing at a great level. It would be very tough," she added.

The Yugoslav, winner of three Grand Slam titles last year and hot favourite to win her second Australian Open, said she would not accept any rule changes to help her. "We would play normally or not at all. It would be great for tennis in general."

The largest crowd ever to watch a tennis match was in September 1973 when the great women's player Billie Jean King defeated Bobby Riggs 6-4 6-3 6-3, then in his fifties, before 30,472 people at the Houston Astrodome.

Becker, when asked for his reaction to such a game, said dismissively. "It doesn't interest me. I prefer real matches."

Gullit warns of Dutch exodus from Milan

ROME (R) — AC Milan's Dutch international Ruud Gullit warned that he and compatriots Frank Rijkaard and Marco Van Basten could all leave the Italian club if Milan recruit more foreign players.

Milan are expected to sign Red Star Belgrade midfielder Dejan Savicevic for next season and have under contract another Yugoslav, Zvonimir Boban, who is now on loan at Bari, prompting speculation the Dutch trio may soon be disrupted.

"It has been very important to bring players of the same nationality together and the results over the years show this. It would be risky to break up this balance," Gullit said in an interview in the Gazzetta dello Sport newspaper.

Gullit said he wanted to wait until the end of the season before discussing an extension to his contract which expires in June 1993 but added if one Dutchman decided not to sign a new agreement the other two could follow suit.

"We Dutchmen are very close and each wants to know what the other two are doing," he said.

Milan's Dutch trio helped take the Italian club to European Cup triumphs in 1989 and 1990 and have been in splendid form again this season as Milan approach the halfway on top of the league and with an unbeaten record.

Italian clubs can currently field only three foreign players in league matches but Milan President Silvio Berlusconi recently announced a grandiose plan to form two squads for next season — one for the domestic programme and one for European competition.

Gullit, now 29, said last year he could leave Italy at the age of 30 and go and play in the new Japanese League which has already recruited England striker Gary Lineker.

"I still feel young but I haven't ruled out Japan," he said.

"For one thing, I'd score a lot of goals with my head down there ... the Japanese all only come up to chest-height on me."

Zaire, Morocco draw at African Nations Cup

DAKAR (R) — Zaire equalised with only one minute to spare to end Morocco's hopes of victory in a gripping climax to their drawn Group B match at the African Nations Cup soccer finals.

The clash ended 1-1 and was marked by a spate of bookings, with Morocco's German coach Ott Werner being shown a red card during the second half and sent off.

Three minutes remained and the score was looked at 0-0 when Morocco took a lucky lead. Mouhsine Boulhal crossed from an outside position and substitute said Rokbi tapped in from close range.

But as Morocco celebrated, Zaire broke away and scored almost directly from the kick-off.

This time Zaire substitute Tchong Nongbe was the architect with a cross from the right which striker Ngole Kona swept home

from and unmarked, close range position.

The two goals brought a dramatic end to a fiercely-fought match in which at least seven Zaire players were cautioned — the referee had already booked six before he waved his yellow card at a crowd of protesting players after the Morocco goal — and one from Morocco.

Zaire, regarding as tournament outsiders, had surprised Morocco with their strength and technique in attack, but the Moroccan's superior teamwork looked like earning them victory.

Both teams squandered chances including one when Zaire were awarded a penalty for handball by a Moroccan defender in the second half.

Mbote Ndanga took the kick, but his weak shot was straight at reserve goalkeeper Khalil Azmi, who made a comfortable save.

Piquet denies plan to quit, but may not race this year

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (AP) — A day after announcing his retirement, three-time auto racing champion Nelson Piquet said he didn't mean it but said he wouldn't join the Formula One circuit this year with a "competitive car."

Piquet released a statement calling the resulting uproar over reports of his retirement "useless and empty." He said he might race for the Ligier team in 1992.

"My decision has always been to dispute the championship with a winning car," said Piquet. "If the car is not there, I am automatically out of the Formula One."

He said he was not interested in driving for the Benetton team or "any others of the same class. If tomorrow a team like the Williams, McLaren or Ligier offered me a competitive car, I'd drive."

He surprised reporters Monday by announcing his withdrawal from the elite Formula One circuit.

"The race driver has retired," Piquet said in a television interview in Brasilia, the Brazilian capital.

Later, however, Piquet denied plans to quit in an interview with Folha De Sao Paulo, Brazil's largest circulation daily newspaper.

"Write it down: I will race in the '92 season," Piquet was quoted as saying. He said the announcement about retiring had been "badly interpreted."

Piquet's wife, Katherine, tried early Tuesday to clear up the confusion.

"What he has said here at home is that he's waiting for a good car for the next season," she said. "If he gets one, he'll race."

Long considered one of Formula One's top drivers and a sought-after developer of race cars, Piquet won 23 races and 24 pole positions in 204 races during his 13-year career.

In 1978, following fellow Brazilian

and twice world champion Emerson Fittipaldi, Piquet broke into Formula One racing with the now-defunct Ensign team.

Brabham owner Bernie Ecclestone recognised his talent and hired the young driver in 1979. The two began a long and successful partnership that brought Brabham and Piquet two World Championships in 1981 and 1983.

After switching to the Williams-Honda team, Piquet edged teammate Nigel Mansell of England to win a third championship in 1987, joining the ranks of legendary drivers Manuel Fangaio, Jack Brabham, Jackie and Nickie Lauda.

12 U.S. cities to host 1994 World Cup

NEW YORK (AP) — Organisers of the 1994 World Cup have decided to use 12 cities for the 1994 tournament and will announce their choices in early March. World Cup Chairman Alan Rothenberg said.

Mr. Rothenberg said the final sites will be selected after World Cup USA 1994, the organising committee for the 52-game tournament, makes its recommendations to international soccer's governing body, FIFA (Federation International de Football Association).

The organisers had said before that eight to 12 cities would be chosen.

Twenty-six cities bid for games during the tournament, to be played from June 17-July 17, 1994. Nineteen cities still are under consideration, and the final selection will be made by FIFA based upon the recommendations of the organising committee.

Meanwhile, World Cup USA 1994 unveiled its mascot, a cute cartoon dog designed by Warner Brothers Animation Studio.

The dog, which emerged from an artificial fog along with Pele during a laser-light show, wears a red-white-and-blue soccer uniform, has big, floppy ears and an enormous nose. It doesn't have a name yet and Mr. Rothenberg said there will be a contest to

select one.

Mr. Rothenberg also said that the organising committee will start allowing reservations for World Cup tickets this July, after games are assigned to specific cities by FIFA.

Cities still under consideration as potential World Cup sites are Atlanta; Foxboro, Mass.; Chicago; Columbus, Ohio; Dallas; Denver; Pontiac; Michigan; Kansas City; Los Angeles; Miami; New Haven; East Rutherford; New Jersey; New Orleans; Orlando, Florida; Philadelphia; San Francisco; Seattle; Tampa, Florida and Washington.

In addition, the U.S. national team said Tuesday it would play

in a four-team tournament from May 30-June 7 with Italy, Ireland and Portugal. The United States will play Ireland at Washington on May 30, Portugal at Chicago on June 3 and Italy at Chicago on June 6.

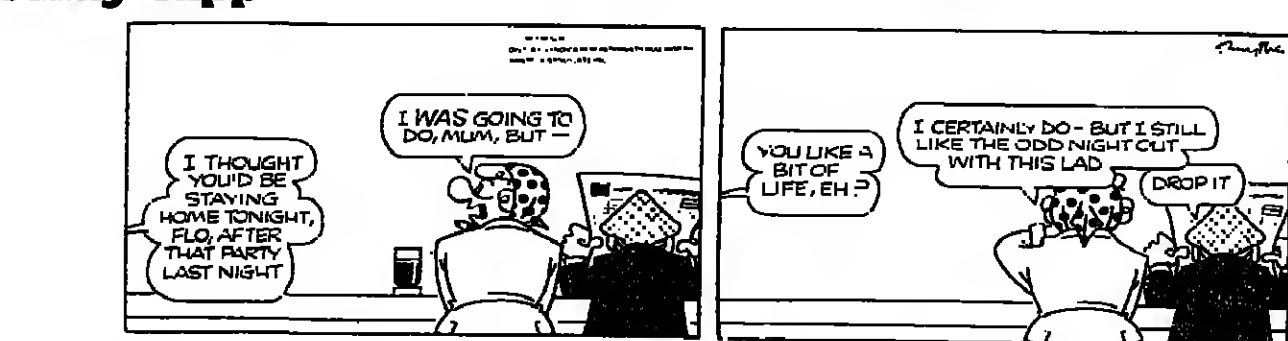
Italy will play Portugal at New Haven, Connecticut, on May 31 and Ireland at Foxboro, Mass., on June 4. Ireland will play Portugal at Foxboro on June 7.

On the financial side, Mr. Rothenberg said McDonald's Corp. would become another official World Cup sponsor, joining Canon Inc., Coca-Cola Co., Fuji Photo Film Co., Gillette Co., JVC Corp and Mastercard International.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY JANUARY 17, 1992
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: No exact aspects today could result in considerable confusion or at best, misunderstandings, making the best course to pursue one of making no decisions and studying all phases of any plan as you keep things in park.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You can meet with long time friends who have a sparkle as well as make new acquaintances with those unusual qualities appeal to you.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Contact those in positions of authority who are able to give a boost to your career ambitions and let them know exactly how you plan to operate.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Be off and away to make new allies with those of different backgrounds or who think differently from you and join forces in some interesting venture.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You need to put more modern and up to date formulas in your business interests or practices happen to be get best results.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Besides those usual proven associates you now can have satisfactory relations by seeking out some new ones who have advanced ideas in your field.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) A regular schedule that makes

greater use of modern conveniences and formulas which can be placed in your daily routines is advisable now.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You can put some zip and zest into whatever special gifts you have now by considering how you can best utilize them to your advantage.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) A good day to look your home and see just how it can be improved so that you will more operative skill there for whatever you must get done.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) A very good day to get at correspondence and communications that you have put off so it is gotten out of the way and for phone calls.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Think out what you can do to have more abundance and how you can so streamline your budget and assets so you can have more desired pleasures.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You can be just as personal as you like today in improving your health and or your appearance and going after unusual desires you have in mind.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You have many intimate and personal tasks that you can do today and get them done so you can later forage in the outside world with more confidence.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) A regular schedule that makes

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY JANUARY 16, 1992
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Make sure you discuss with others how they would like to have conditions about them and what it is exactly that you have in mind so that you will be certain to avoid routine problems.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You would be wise to carefully consider what persons you wish in your life as friends and acquaintances and those you will do better without.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Think out your worldly aims and ambitions for this day and make plans so you will be able to put more spark and enjoyment in them.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Whatever new courses of action intrigue you should today be considered from their most expansive angles and a schedule a pursue to do so.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Design a plan today whereby the various obligations and responsibilities that you have can be more easily attended to with efficiency.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Outside partners should take the centre of stage in your thoughts and you would be wise to place them in your life so, both you and they do the best.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) A regular schedule that makes

greater use of modern conveniences and formulas which can be placed in your daily routines is advisable now.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You can put some zip and zest into whatever special gifts you have now by considering how you can best utilize them to your advantage.

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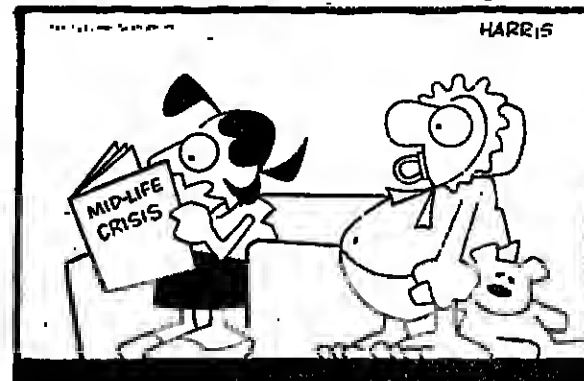
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THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris



"During mid-life crisis one may seek the security of old habits from the past..."

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY JANUARY 17, 1992
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

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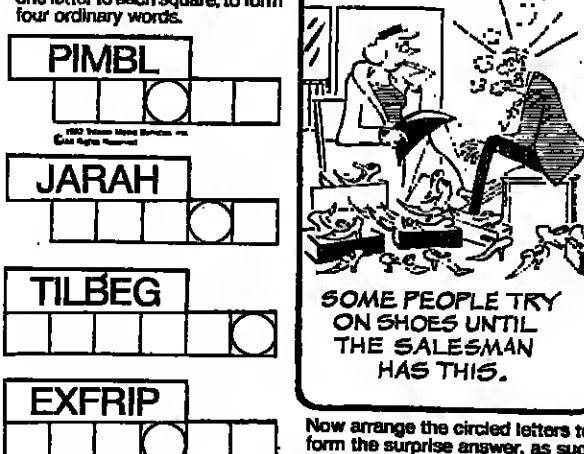
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JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Print answer here:

Yesterday's Jumbles: SURLY PATIO LAWFUL TALLOW
Answer: Overpraise never hurts unless you do this—SWALLOW IT

THE Daily Crossword

by Betty Jorgensen



Financial Markets

in co-operation with

Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	NEW YORK CLOSE 14.1.92	SINGAPORE CLOSE 15.1.92
Sterling Pound	1.7845	1.7860 **
Deutsche Mark	1.5930	1.5930
Swiss Franc	1.4115	1.7967**
French Franc	5.4300	5.4410**
Japanese Yen	126.85	126.73
European Currency Unit	1.2800	1.2778

1 Unit for SFG

European Opening at 8.00 a.m. GMT

Data: 15.1.92

Eurocurrency Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.06	4.12	4.12	4.43
Sterling Pound	10.62	10.43	10.37	10.37
Deutsche Mark	9.37	9.31	9.31	9.18
Swiss Franc	7.75	7.81	7.75	7.66
French Franc	9.81	9.75	9.62	9.50
Japanese Yen	5.51	5.12	4.87	4.81
European Currency Unit	10.25	10.31	10.12	10.00

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding 1.5 million L.S. or equivalent

Precious Metals

Metal	USD/oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/oz	JD/Gm
Gold	354.9	6.80	Silver	4.09	.090

21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Data: 15.1.92

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	.678	.680
Sterling Pound	1.2112	1.2173
Deutsche Mark	.4256	.4277
Swiss Franc	.4801	.4825
French Franc	.1246	.1250
Japanese Yen	.5348	.5375
Dutch Guilder	.3777	.3796
Swedish Krona	.1168	.1172
Italian Lira	.0564	.0567
Belgian Franc	.02094	.02104

Per 100

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7690	1.7810
Lebanese Lira	.0765	.0774
Saudi Riyal	.1805	.1815
Kuwaiti Dinar	---	---
Qatari Riyal	.1837	.1849
Egyptian Pound	.2000	.2100
Omani Riyal	1.7360	1.7440
UAE Dirham	.1837	.1849
Greek Drachma	.3690	.3705
Cypriot Pound	1.4910	1.5020

Per 100

CAE Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	13/1/92	Close	14/1/92	Change
All-Share	134.04	---	134.12	---
Banking Sector	110.59	---	110.65	---
Insurance Sector	131.74	---	131.65	---
Industry Sector	168.38	---	168.64	---
Services Sector	152.19	---	151.16	---

December 31, 1990

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One Sterling	1.7540/50	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.1552/57	Canadian dollar
	1.6255/65	Deutsche marks
	1.8240/50	Dutch guilders
	1.4353/63	Swiss francs
	33.43/48	Belgian francs
	5.5310/60	French francs
	1224/1226	Italian lire
	128.60/70	Japanese yen
	5.8930/80	Swedish crowns
	6.3650/3700	Norwegian crowns
	6.2750/2800	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	355.35/355.85	U.S. dollars

Resistance to Yeltsin's reforms grows

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin faced growing resistance over his economic reforms Wednesday, as miners warned of strikes and citizens of St. Petersburg greeted him with protest placards.

Local journalists said ambulance and taxi drivers held token strikes as Mr. Yeltsin flew into St. Petersburg, Russia's second city. Ambulances drove in procession through the city and teams answered only emergency calls.

At St. Petersburg's port protesters held banners reading "Yeltsin — who organized hunger in the country?" and "Boris, you're wrong again" — a reference to a Communist Party meeting three years ago when a prominent hardliner waved his finger and told him "Boris, you're wrong."

Mr. Yeltsin's bitter departure from the party leadership soon afterwards sowed the seeds for his later opposition to the communists and their then leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

The Russian Parliament, whose speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov has been the most vocal critic of Mr. Yeltsin's reforms, put off until Mr. Yeltsin's return on Thursday a debate that will turn a harsh spotlight on the economy.

Mr. Khasbulatov has declared his intention to get parliament to vote on dismissing the government, although he is unlikely to muster enough support to pass a motion.

Mr. Yeltsin was elected president with massive support last June and launched his reforms knowing that hardship would undermine his backing in the provinces as well as Moscow. He promises a stabilization before

the end of the year.

Rosiskaya Gazeta daily said the Vorkuta coalfield in Russia's far north was preparing to strike. In the huge Karaganda field in Kazakhstan, Interfax news agency reported that a strike several days old had closed 15 of 26 mines.

In the Kuzbass coalfield, Russia's biggest and perhaps the key barometer of support for Mr. Yeltsin, who received strong backing here in the elections, his popularity seemed to be waning.

Alexander Oslanidi, acting chairman of the Kuzbass Workers' Committee, said there had already been wildcat strikes and discontent was growing.

The committee wanted to send a delegation to see Mr. Yeltsin, but got a message Wednesday that he was too busy now and would see them at a later date.

Instead the committee passed a resolution which said there was now disillusionment with Mr. Yeltsin's privatization programme, which miners once energetically supported as a chance to earn realistic money for their coal.

The programme was benefiting not working people but former communist functionaries who had abandoned the party but used their positions to take power in industry.

For most citizens, the yardstick of the success of price liberalisation, which has pushed prices up between three and 30 times, will be whether food appears in the shops.

So far, the only real change for many is that even the most basic foods, bread and milk, have become almost unaffordable.

Mr. Oslanidi said foods such as

oranges, apples and sausages had appeared in the shops of the Kuzbass region, but at prices too high for most workers to afford.

The committee called for the government to tackle the food shortage and high prices.

It called for Mr. Yeltsin's decree on privatisation to be repealed and the price and taxation system for mining enterprises to be changed, as well as better information and wider publicity for the reform programme as a whole.

Russia has already been running down its emergency strategic stocks, intended for crisis or war, to supplement dwindling food, according to the Komsomolskaya Pravda daily.

In better times, the reserves would have supported the entire country for eight to 10 days, said G. Kaliberda, deputy head of the state reserves.

"But with what's left now, we'd hold out for a day," he pointed out.

As he tours Russia to defend his economic reforms that have raised prices but not put more goods on the shelves, President Yeltsin is getting an earful from angry shoppers.

He has vowed not to back away from his reforms and is urging patience, saying his free-market policies need six to eight months to produce results.

"All civilized countries have gone through this," he told about 300 people in front of a sewing factory in the city of Novosibirsk, about 400 kilometres south-west of Moscow.

At another meat store in the Bryansk region of southern Russia, Mr. Yeltsin accused state suppliers of sabotaging his free-

market reforms by producing high-cost luxury goods when staples are scarce.

"These swindlers are doing it on purpose to frame us, setting these prices," Mr. Yeltsin said in an exchange shown on Russian Television.

"The people are very displeased with the prices. The prices are not acceptable," interrupted one of the shopkeepers.

Mr. Yeltsin also expressed outrage at the high price of smoked sausage — 148 roubles a kilogramme — and he said meat-processing plants should produce more low-cost goods like boiled sausage, which consumers want. Most Russians consider smoked sausage a delicacy, to be eaten only on holidays.

The average Russian salary, after the price increases, is 960 roubles a month.

"I think this is a provocation," the president said, his voice rising. "The head of the meat processing factory ought to be fired, thrown out of his job."

Indeed, Mr. Yeltsin later ordered that the director of the factory be fired, Russian media reported Wednesday.

Mr. Yeltsin also reportedly ordered the firing of the deputy chairman of the local committee dealing with the aftermath of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear facility. The panel has been criticised for failing to ensure workers' safety and being too slow to build housing for people evacuated from the contaminated zone.

Mr. Yeltsin said the stores should be given the status of "independent legal entities," so they can buy food directly from producers.

Mr. Yeltsin's free-market reforms stripped away decades of strict Kremlin controls on prices to curb inflation and stimulate production. But shoppers complained not only about the spectacularly high cost of goods but also that more of them were not on the shelves.

The Associated Press Moscow marketbasket, a weekly survey of 15 food and basic consumer items, showed that state store prices for staples such as macaroni and smoked sausage doubled from the week before.

In a further sign of Russia's economic collapse, a Moscow official said industry in the capital was virtually at a standstill since the start of the year because factories in other former Soviet republics had stopped supplying their raw materials.

The Interfax news agency quoted Boris Nikolsky, the city's first deputy prime minister, as saying that most Moscow enterprises had only enough supplies to last two or three weeks.

Factories producing prefabricated concrete for building projects may be forced to stop work in five or six days, he said.

Mr. Yeltsin picked up some support from the man he forced from power: Mikhail Gorbachev. The former Soviet president, who began his first day of work as a private citizen since resigning Dec. 25, urged Russians to give Mr. Yeltsin's economic reforms a chance.

"The country is living through a very difficult period — perhaps its most difficult period," Mr. Gorbachev said as he started work at a political think-tank he founded last summer called the

Fund for Socio-Political Research.

Mr. Yeltsin Tuesday rejected legislative demands that his government resign.

"The government is not a pair of socks one can just throw away," he said. "By the way, even socks are not thrown away these days."

Speaking to dozens of reporters, Mr. Gorbachev said it was too early for Russians to judge Mr. Yeltsin's economic reforms that were implemented less than two weeks ago.

"The country is living through a very difficult period — perhaps its most difficult period," Mr. Gorbachev said, according to the Interfax news agency.

"I would not hurry with any assessments. But this does not negate the fact that the president and the government must respond to the signals coming from various regions and in the republic," Interfax and Russian Television quoted him as saying.

"They are very serious and these facts deserve to be taken into account, and necessary corrections need to be made," said Mr. Gorbachev, appearing fit and smiling at reporters.

Mr. Gorbachev also said he believed further reforms would be necessary to prevent a catastrophe in the commonwealth, to which all the former Soviet republics except Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Georgia belong.

He suggested Russia should implement a new tax policy to provide production incentives, and curb enterprises that have economic monopolies, which he called "very dangerous." The TV and news agency reports said.

Business leaders see U.S. living standard threatened

WASHINGTON (AP) — A group of top business executives warned Congress Tuesday that the country was facing deep-seated economic problems that, if not corrected, could depress growth rates and living standards for years to come.

One executive warned that the United States was on the road to becoming a second-rate economic power because of a failure to invest adequately in such areas as education and commercial research and development.

"The long term economic future of this country is in crisis. Time is running out," said Robert Rubin, a senior partner of Goldman Sachs and Co. financial firm.

"Our political leaders must take the lead in creating the political and public will to sacrifice consumption for quite some time to do what is necessary to deal with these problems," he added.

Charles Corry, the chairman of USX Corp., the steel and energy giant, said that misguided trade and tax policies by the U.S. government had devastated U.S. manufacturing.

"We have lost a large portion of the best jobs in our economy," Mr. Corry said. "The domestic steel industry alone has lost more than 335,000 jobs since 1974. These were the jobs that made the American factory worker the

envy of his peers around the world."

The executives testified at a hearing chaired by Senator Don Riegle, chairman of the Senate Banking Committee. Mr. Riegle is sponsoring a bill to force the Japanese to eliminate their \$42 billion trade surplus with America over the next five years or face import quotas on Japanese car shipments to this country.

While Mr. Corry said he supported Mr. Riegle's legislation, the other executives cautioned against making Japan a scapegoat for America's troubles.

Mr. Rubin said it was wrong to blame Japan for the failure of Americans to make the kinds of investments needed to spur future productivity gains.

"The primary problem Japan represents to us is in being an excuse for not dealing with our own problems," Mr. Rubin said. He said that the peacetime record expansion of the 1980s was fuelled by a consumption binge that was founded by ever-increasing levels of debt.

"Now we are left with the debt but not the offsetting benefit that would have occurred had the debt financed public or private investment," he said.

He said that while personal incomes have risen over the past 20 years, the gains were heavily influenced by increased number of hours worked, rather than in

significant gains in productivity.

"While other countries were increasing standards of living through savings, investment, quality education... and so on, Americans, who used to be the world's leaders in productivity improvement, have been relying on more family members working," Mr. Rubin said.

Farm state Democrats said President Bush's promises to protect U.S. agriculture in international trade talks were too little and too late.

"There's no money where his mouth is," said Dan Glickman, a Kansas Democrat who is chairman of the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Wheat, Soybeans and Feed Grains.

Mr. Glickman said that if Mr. Bush were really serious about getting tough with the European Community (EC) over export subsidies, he would threaten to invoke provisions of the 1990 farm bill that would "strike a dagger in the heart of European agriculture policy."

Those U.S. options include boosting funding for the United States' own farm export subsidies, which total about \$1 billion a year to Europe's \$12 billion. The Agriculture Department estimates the European Community spent an additional \$25 billion on internal farm subsidies in 1990, while the United States spent \$8.2 billion.

Mr. Bush, in a speech Monday to the American Farm Bureau Federation, said U.S. farmers had been pounded by European export subsidies and called for a worldwide end to the practice.

Farm groups say it is fine for Mr. Bush to attack export subsidies, but it will take more than that to cure what ails American agriculture — dwindling numbers of farmers and prices below production costs.

"The subsidies of course hurt. But we're doing the same thing," says Larry Mitchell, director of federal-state relations for the

American Agriculture Movement.

The real issue, however, is an oversupply of farm products, he said.

"If the Europeans and the United States had adequate supply management and didn't overproduce, we wouldn't be out there knocking the hell out of each other in the export market," Mr. Mitchell said.

Mr. Bush said the administration would not agree to dismantle its own export subsidies "until other countries do the same thing."

The question of subsidies has snarled international trade talks in Geneva under the Uruguay round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Mr. Bush promised the farm bureau leaders Monday he would not back an accord unfavourable to American farmers.

"I am not going to put our farmers at an unfair disadvantage," Mr. Bush said. "We will not let U.S. agriculture disarm unilaterally."

But Tom Daschle, a South Dakota Democrat, said the president's pledge was too late. "He may have missed it, but we've been disarming for the past five years," Mr. Daschle said. Since 1986, he said, the United States has cut farm spending in half.

"As it looks now, an agreement will merely lock in the status quo for the EC, while many of our producers will be forced to give up their protections here," Mr. Daschle said.

Arthur Dunkel, the director-general of GATT, has proposed trimming domestic farm supports by 20 per cent and export subsidies by 36 per cent.

Meanwhile, disappointing Christmas sales pushed the nation's retail sales lower for a third straight month in December, boding the advance for all of 1991 to the smallest in 30 years.

Analysts saw little chance for improvement before summer due

to Americans' worries over jobs and incomes. Some said the report, which also showed sales had been worse than first thought in October and November, could mean the economy had slipped back into recession.

In December, the Commerce Department said, sales totalled a seasonally adjusted \$151.2 billion, down from \$151.7 billion in November. It was the third straight disappointing holiday shopping season, which many retailers count on for half of their annual sales and profits.

The department also calculated that sales had fallen 0.5 per cent in November and 0.1 per cent in October. Originally, November's sales had been reported as rising 0.3 per cent. October's were first reported as unchanged from the previous month.

For the year, sales totalled \$1.8 trillion, a gain of 0.7 per cent after a 3.8 per cent advance in 1990. Last year's gain was the smallest increase since a 0.1 per cent decline in 1961.

Kenneth Baker, an economist with Cahners Economics in Newton, Mass., suggested that the economy was flat in the October-December period.

"It could tip either way," he said, "but it's not inconceivable that we'll have a minus fourth quarter."

Because retail sales account for one-third of the nation's economic activity, a lack of consumer participation threatens any recovery from the recession.

"Until the economy gets a

boost from Washington, consumer confidence will continue to drag, and as long as consumer confidence is weak, the retail sector will remain in the doldrums," said John Albertine, head of a Washington economic forecasting service.

Mr. Baker contended, however, that falling interest rates, which already have captured the attention of the investment community, will show up in other economic sectors by mid-year.

Department store sales fell last month 2.2 per cent after edging up 0.6 per cent in November. Apparel sales were down 0.7 per cent after remaining flat a month earlier.

Grocery store sales were up 0.3 per cent after falling 0.4 per cent the previous month. Drug store sales rose an identical 0.3 per cent after posting a 0.6 per cent loss in November.

Restaurant and bar sales were up 1.5 per cent after a 0.9 per cent gain the previous month. But gasoline station sales dropped 2.4 per cent after a 0.8 per cent gain a month earlier.

Automobile sales fell 1.1 per cent in December after a 1.5 per cent loss a month earlier.

Carmakers had earlier said that 1991 was the worst year for sales since 1983.

Excluding motor vehicles, sales were off 0.2 per cent in December, the same as a month earlier. For the year, sales excluding autos inched up 1.4 per cent, the smallest increase since a 1.2 per cent gain in 1961.

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For more information; please call Restoration Committee Secretary/ Director of Al Aqsa Mosque. Ministry of Awqaf & Islamic Affairs, Amman — Jabal Al Hussein, P.O.Box 659, Fax: 602254, Tel.: 666141-5

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2. Small, furnished roof (penthouse). Location: Shmeisani Please call 661658

EC grants recognition to Croatia and Slovenia

ZAGREB (AP) — The European Community (EC) Wednesday recognised Croatia and Slovenia as independent nations, dealing what could be a fatal blow to the long-crumbling Yugoslav Federation.

"This is a day that will go down in the history of the Croatian people as a major event," Croatian radio declared.

"Yugoslavia is now in a state of dissolution," said Belgian foreign affairs spokesman Johan Verbeke as EC recognition was announced at its headquarters in Brussels.

Only Serbia and Montenegro remain committed to preserving Yugoslavia.

The 12-nation Community held off recognising two other Yugoslav breakaway republics, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia.

It was unclear whether recognition of Croatia would help end the seven-month-old civil war pitting Croats against Serbian irregulars and the Serb-dominated federal army. But recognition puts tremendous pressure on Serbia, which the EC has labelled the aggressor in the conflict, to stop its military campaign.

Thousands have been killed and more than 600,000 left homeless in the war, triggered by the independence declarations of Slovenia and Croatia last June 25.

The EC action was spurred by Germany, whose recognition of the two breakaway republics last month led the EC to set Wednesday as the deadline for recognising Yugoslav republics.

"The German policy on Yugoslavia has proved correct," vowed German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher.

While Slovenia was recognised

without condition, the EC demanded a commitment from Croatian President Franjo Tudjman to respect the rights of the 600,000 ethnic Serbs in his republic, EC officials said.

Croats showed their gratitude to Bonn with a new hit single — "Danke Deutschland" (Thank You Germany) — aired on TV.

Several storefront windows on Zagreb's central Jelacic Square displayed slogans such as "15 Jan. 1992 — the long-awaited day of Croatia's international recognition."

The move had been expected. Germany, Iceland, Ukraine, and the Baltic nations had already recognised Slovenia and Croatia, and the Vatican recognised the heavily Roman Catholic republics this week. Denmark and Austria also joined the list Wednesday.

But EC policy Yugoslavia remained split. French cabinet spokesman Jack Lang said that although France and Britain would recognise Croatia and Slovenia, neither would dispatch an ambassador to Croatia without assurances on minority rights.

The mood was muted in Zagreb, the Croatian capital, and in Belgrade, the Serbian and federal capital.

"Why should I celebrate? Does this mean we will get our bones back?" asked Tomislav Braun, a Croatian refugee from Vukovar, which fell to Serb-led forces two months ago.

Serbian refugees from Croatia picked through clothing at a Red Cross Centre in Belgrade mulling the latest step in the violent disintegration of a country first formed in 1918.

Djordje Prodanovic, 53, of the village of Bujavica near the cen-

tral Croatian city of Pakrac, was asked if he could ever return to an independent Croatia. "No way," he replied. "I don't trust the Croatian government."

"Of course, we can't live together any more," he said.

Serbia has been hard-hit by EC sanctions. Exports and imports have plummeted, inflation is running at 250 per cent a year and tens of thousands of Serbian refugees depend on government help.

But Serbian leaders in Croatia have insisted they will hold out for autonomy rather than agree to the deployment of up to 10,000 U.N. peacekeepers and the demilitarisation of the region.

Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia, two republics which also sought EC recognition, failed to gain it. An EC source said a commission report raised doubts about Bosnia's ability to meet commitments to human rights and democracy and settle border disputes peacefully.

Croatia, which borders on Bosnia, is an ethnic patchwork of Slavic Muslims, Serbs and Croats. Tension is high and many observers fear war could spread to Bosnia now that a U.N.-brokered truce, the 15th, has halted fighting for almost two weeks in Croatia.

Macedonia's bid for independence is blocked by EC member Greece, which charges the republic stole its name from an area of northern Greece and represses its ethnic Albanian minority.

Beffiting its role as architect of the recognition policy, Germany was the first EC nation to sign a formal agreement on diplomatic ties with Slovenia.

Slovenia fought a brief, suc-

cessful war against federal forces after it declared independence. By late October, the last federal troops had withdrawn, and the ethnically homogenous region of 2 million had its own border posts, flags and currency.

Croatia's status remains more precarious. A first contingent of 50 U.N. peacekeepers arrived in Croatia and Serbia Tuesday to help strengthen the current truce.

The Serbian-dominated Yugoslav government accused the European Community (EC) of violating international law by announcing that its 12 member states would recognise Slovenia and Croatia.

The government sharply criticised the decision in a statement issued after a cabinet meeting and said it would continue to operate until agreement is reached on future relations between the six Yugoslav republics.

"With regret we have received the information that the EC countries and some others are recognising the independence of some Yugoslav republics," said the statement, carried by the Belgrade-based Tanjug News Agency.

"As the Yugoslav side has underlined more than once, this step is contrary to the sovereign rights of Yugoslavia which result from the main contemporary international legal documents."

The Yugoslav federal government is now dominated by Serbia and its allies Montenegro and the Serbian provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo, whose pro-Serbian leaders oppose the break-up of the Balkan federation.

Slovenia and Croatia no longer have any representatives in the government.

U.S. group heads for Moscow

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a move to safeguard nuclear weapons, a U.S. delegation left for Moscow and talks in the four former Soviet republics where long-range nuclear weapons are stockpiled.

Under-Secretary of State Richard Bartholomew, leader of the delegation, said before leaving that the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan "go in the right direction that we would like to see."

However, he told the Associated Press, "we are interested in cooperating on steps that will strengthen even further the security of these weapons and accelerate and expand the elimination of these weapons."

The delegation — drawn from military, intelligence and diplomatic sections of government — is to hold talks on controlling exports of weapons and nuclear technology, as well as dismantling thousands of missiles under U.S.-Soviet arms control treaties.

"Clearly, we don't have any evidence of an intent to back away from commitments in the nuclear area," Mr. Bartholomew said.

There are more than 17,000 long-range nuclear warheads in Russia, 4,200 in Ukraine, 1,700 in Kazakhstan and 1,200 in Belarus.

Also, tens of thousands of battlefield nuclear weapons are stored in the four nations and other former Soviet republics. They are more susceptible to theft than long-range missiles and could fall into the hands of terrorists.

"There is evidence of efforts being made by the various former republics to ensure control of these weapons, which again we would be interested in moving even further," Mr. Bartholomew said.

NATO officials said last month that some of these smaller arms have been moved around during the turmoil that accompanied the breakup of the Soviet Union and that even local officials are having a difficult time keeping track of them.

Secretary of State James Baker visited the four nuclear republics last year, and leaders pledged to join the international accord to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and technology.

In the meantime, the strategic weapons remain in silos, on bombers and on submarines, and the tactical nuclear weapons are even more widely dispersed.

Mr. Baker termed the safeguarding of nuclear weapons his top priority. On Dec. 30, leaders of the post-USSR Commonwealth of Independent States agreed to a joint command of nuclear weapons. However, they also paved the way for the creation of separate armies.

Congress has approved \$400 million for American technicians to assist in the dismantling of nuclear weapons. They have not been sent yet.

Meanwhile, British Defence Secretary Tom King said Tuesday at least one group of the approximately 3,000 key nuclear scientists in the former Soviet Union were not paid in December and appear to be under no control.

Mr. King, speaking in the House of Commons, warned that would-be nuclear powers in the Third World were trying to hire the scientists "who could make a really significant contribution" to a new weapons programme.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Britain promises to expand EC

LONDON (AP) — Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, promising Britain will use its presidency of the European Community to expand membership, predicted Tuesday that Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia will belong within the decade. "We, the British government, want it (expansion) to be as quick as is... compatible with success, and we shall use our presidency in the second half of this year to set the stage as far as we can," Mr. Hurd said. Britain takes over, from Portugal in July, the Community's six-month rotating presidency. Mr. Hurd, who was giving evidence to the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, said Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary already have EC association agreements — one step from full membership.

New French tank attracting buyers

SATORY, France (R) — The French Defence Ministry took delivery of the first new Leclerc battle tank, which is already attracting foreign buyers. The Leclerc, featuring advanced electronics and automatic loading, will undergo final tests before being incorporated into a regular French unit early next year. Defence analysts said several Gulf countries and Sweden were already taking an interest. Giat Industries, the state-owned company which makes the 55-tonne Leclerc, would not confirm this. Managing Director Pierre Chiquet said: "Talks are now being held with potential clients in sunny countries and in cold-weather climates but they have asked not to be identified." At a handover ceremony, Mr. Chiquet said Giat would probably produce about 100 Leclercs a year, but export orders could double the figure.

Euro-Parliament elects president

STRASBOURG, France (AP) — Egon Klepsch, a German Christian Democrat, was elected Tuesday by fellow legislators as president of the 518-member European Parliament. Mr. Klepsch, 61, a veteran member of the European Assembly, defeated two Belgians and an Italian candidate for the 2½-year term. The final vote was 253-474. The outcome was no surprise. Under an exchange deal, Mr. Klepsch's Christian Democratic, who held 121 seats, voted for a Socialist president in 1989 in return for Socialist backing for a Christian Democratic president this year. The Socialists, who hold 180 seats and are the largest group in parliament, and the Christian Democrats, command more than half of the assembly.

CIA deputy director resigns

WASHINGTON (AP) — Deputy CIA Director Richard Kerr has resigned, the White House said Tuesday, four months after he gave Senate testimony that added to questions about CIA chief Robert Gates' knowledge of the Iran-contra affair. Mr. Kerr and his associates denied his decision was linked in any way to the testimony last year at Gates' confirmation hearings to be CIA director. President George Bush said he was accepting the resignation, which takes effect March 2, with regret. The White House released a statement saying Mr. Kerr had served "the country and CIA with dedication and creativity." Vice Adm. William Studeman, director of the National Security Agency, is on a short list of candidates to replace him, officials said. The change appeared to have been motivated by a sweeping restructuring of the intelligence community undertaken by Mr. Gates in response to the changing world situation with the demise of the Soviet Union.

French ruling party HQ searched

PARIS (AP) — Investigators searched the governing Socialist Party's headquarters in a hunt for evidence in a payoff scandal dating from President Francois Mitterrand's 1980 re-election campaign. Judge Renaud Van Ruymbeke, the investigating magistrate, and police combed through the party's financial records as a crowd of journalists waited for them outside. But they left through another exit without commenting on what they had seized. "What the judge was looking for, I don't know," said Socialist Party official Laurent Azoulay, who accompanied Mr. Van Ruymbeke. "I don't think he came away very happy." The search came without warning hours after new Socialist First Secretary Laurent Fabius, chosen last week to improve the party's image ahead of regional elections in March, moved into his offices. It was part of a long-running investigation into charges that Socialist politicians financed the 1988 electoral campaign through payoffs from construction firms in reward for giving them public contracts.

Cambodia frees 290 prisoners

PHNOM PENH (R) — The Cambodian government released 290 political and war prisoners Wednesday, the first to be freed under international supervision as required by U.N.-sponsored peace accords signed last year. The prisoners, some incarcerated for more than a decade, tearfully embraced relatives when they left Phnom Penh's main prison, a crumbling French colonial relic known as T-3. Some complained of maltreatment until a week ago. They were the first to be freed under the supervision of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as stipulated in peace accords the government signed with three guerrilla factions in October. The treaty obliges all sides to empty their prisons of war and political prisoners. "It is a breakthrough, a major breakthrough," said Jean Jacques Fressard, chief ICRC delegate in Phnom Penh, whose workers were allowed to visit government prisoners for the first time Tuesday.

COLUMN

French inspectors smell a rat in school kitchens

TOULOUSE, France (R) — When the children of Toulouse in south west France sit down to school dinner, their meal may be spiced — with a whiff of dead rat. A health survey of state schools in the area found a catalogue of horrors in their kitchens — dead rodents, spiders' webs several metres high and fridges stuffed with rotting food. "This report is pretty tough," a spokesman for Toulouse City Hall, Jean-Claude Paix, said. The findings are a blow for a city which prides itself on its culinary prowess, notably the thick lentil and sausage stew cassoulet. But Toulouse children evidently have strong stomachs. "We serve more than 275 million meals a year but have no recorded case of food poisoning," Mr. Paix said.

Trial date set for Navratilova-Nelson palimony suit

FORT WORTH, Texas (R) — A U.S. judge Monday set an April 6 trial date for the palimony suit against tennis star Martina Navratilova by former companion Judy Nelson. However, an additional suit filed by Ms. Nelson may complicate matters. Negotiations in the suit, filed by Ms. Nelson in July 1991, had been going on for four months but bogged down last month. Ms. Navratilova's lawyers said. Ms. Nelson is suing Ms. Navratilova for breach of a non-marital cohabitation agreement that she says entitles her to half the assets accumulated during their seven-year relationship — a sum that could reach \$5 million. Ms. Nelson's new lawyers filed an amended lawsuit naming International Management Group, a sports management firm which has represented Ms. Navratilova for more than a decade, as a party to the suit. Lawyers for both sides met with Judge Harry Hopkins by conference call and agreed on the April 6 date.

Sterilised mother wins \$174,500 damages

LONDON (R) — A woman who gave birth eight months after a sterilisation operation won £96,700 (\$174,500) damages in Britain's High Court. Divorcee Linda Allen discovered she was pregnant three months after the operation and had a daughter, Faye, in February 1986. Judge Sir Henry Brooke said Allen's life had been seriously affected by the baby. She had faced financial difficulties after being forced to give up work, he said. Damages and costs were awarded against London's Bloomsbury Health Authority, which admitted liability.

'68 of German women sexually harassed at work'

BONN (R) — More than two thirds of German women say they are regularly sexually harassed at work, but nearly half their male colleagues do not think their behaviour is offensive, a survey said. Sixty-eight per cent of the women questioned by Freundin women's magazine said they suffered regular harassment, including bottom-pinching, being kissed against their will and having their breasts grabbed. Forty-four per cent of the men questioned said they did not believe their female colleagues regarded their behaviour as harassment. But what men consider to be harmless flirtation, women often perceive as an obscene come-on, the survey showed. Sexual harassment is a crime in Germany carrying up to 10 years' imprisonment or a heavy fine, but few women ever complain or go to court, the survey said.

Giant Australian cockroaches make ideal pets

SYDNEY (R) — Seeking the ideal pet? One that doesn't bark or stain the carpet? Then look no further than the humble cockroach. A Sydney entomologist has discovered a lucrative market for the much-maligned "cockie" — he sells mating pairs of giant burrowing cockroaches or Macropanesthia rhinoceros for \$65 dollar (\$48). He has sold 180 pairs in the past 18 months. "You can go away on holidays without any problems about looking after them," says Sydney University's Harley Rose. Mr. Rose says the giant "cockies" need little care.

Ukraine wants army equivalent to neighbours'

WARSAW (R) — Ukraine wants its army to be comparable in size to those of its neighbours but free of nuclear weapons, the republic's Defence Minister Konstantin Morozov said Tuesday.

"The final size of the armed forces will be determined by parliament but it should be equivalent to that which our neighbours have," Mr. Morozov told a news conference at the end of a one-day visit to Poland.

"I do not elaborate but added that the Ukrainian army would eventually be several times smaller than the former Soviet forces stationed in the republic."

"Our forces will never be equipped with nuclear arms," Mr. Morozov added.

He repeated the Ukrainian pledge to remove tactical nuclear weapons from its territory by July

1 and strategic ones before the end of 1994.

Poland's Defence Minister Jan Parys who held talks with Mr. Morozov said the pledge meant the Ukraine did not pose a military threat to Poland.

"We were happy when the Ukraine regained independence and now we are even more happy when we know that our defence aims are convergent," Mr. Parys said.

Poland was the first country to recognise Ukraine's independence after it decided to quit the Soviet Union last December.

Meanwhile, poor but proud, Ukrainians are moving aggressively to construct a strong state, and officials are moving on all fronts to try to make their newly independent country prosper.

Charges filed against 13 Soviet coup suspects

MOSCOW (AP) — Prosecutors on Tuesday charged 13 people — including the former Soviet prime minister, KGB chief and defence minister — with conspiring to seize power during the failed coup that led to the Soviet Union's demise.

The headline offences — including the onetime prime minister, defence minister and KGB chief — could face 10 to 15 years in prison or a firing squad for their part in the August coup, officials said.

No date has been set for the trial that promises to be one of the most spectacular court cases in modern Russian history. Defence lawyers reached by the Associated Press protested that they still have not seen the charges and said it would take a long time for the case to come to trial due to the sheer volume of evidence.

The suspects, six of whom formed an emergency committee that claimed to have taken power from an ailing Mikhail Gorbachev, have already challenged the fairness of the proceedings. Through their lawyers, they have said senior politicians and the media have distorted the facts against them.

Mr. Gorbachev was not implicated in the plot as it was outlined in Tuesday's charges.

Prosecutors earlier decided not to charge the suspects with "high treason," reasoning that the state they allegedly tried to betray — the Soviet Union — has ceased to exist anyway.

The charges culminate a four-month inquiry in which thousands of people were interviewed and 125 volumes of evidence compiled. The TASS News Agency said. In the process, prosecutors scrutinised the KGB, the armed forces, and Communist Party and other institutions.

Among the former Soviet officials charged were KGB chief Vladimir Kryuchkov, Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov, Defence Minister Dmitry Yazov,

Vice President Gennady Yanayev, Alexander Tizyakov, head of the State Enterprise Association, and Vasily Starodubtsev, Peasants Union leader. All helped found the eight-member Emergency Committee.

Two remaining members of the coup committee were not mentioned in the TASS accounting of those charged: Former Security Council official Oleg Baklanov; and former Soviet Interior Minister Boris Pugo, who killed himself when the coup fell through.

Other suspects identified by TASS were: Supreme Soviet Chairman Anatoly Lukyanov; Oleg Shernin, a politburo member; Army Commander Valentin Varennikov; KGB guard chief Yuri Plekhanov and Vyacheslav Generalov, who was Mr. Plekhanov's deputy; ex-KGB Gen. Viktor Grushko and Valery Boldin, Mr. Gorbachev's former chief of staff.

All remain in prison except for Boldin and Gen. Grushko, who have been transferred to hospitals.

Yevgeny Lisov, deputy prosecutor general of the Russian Federation, headed the investigation.

He was quoted Tuesday in the newspaper Izvestia as saying Mr. Gorbachev could become a witness in the case, but there was no evidence to accuse him of coup involvement.

"There is not a hint in his conduct of Mr. Gorbachev's support of the anti-constitutional ambitions of the plotters," Mr. Lisov said, although he added that the plotters may have believed that Mr. Gorbachev would support them because of his "long relations" with them.

Mr. Lisov hinted that Mr. Gorbachev might fall suspect in other ongoing investigations concerning Communist Party finances and KGB activities. "I will not comment upon Gorbachev's stands in these cases now," he said.

Relatives of accused asks Cuba to spare them

WASHINGTON (AP) — With tears in their eyes, the mother and sister of two men sentenced to death in Cuba on terrorism charges appealed Tuesday for help in saving them and a companion from a firing squad.

"There is enough blood. We just want to stop it," said Amelia Cardenas, the sister of Daniel Candelario Santavena, 36, a Miami automobile body worker captured with two others on Dec. 29 when they landed on a Cuban beach.

In Mexico City, meanwhile, Cuban Foreign Minister Isidro Malmeria said the men "should pay for these crimes with their lives."

Dozens of innocent Cubans would have died had the men not been caught trying to sneak onto the island, he said as he arrived for the signing of a peace treaty ending El Salvador's bitter civil war.

U.S. embassy officials said there were no plans for Malmeria to meet with Secretary of State James Baker, who also will attend the signing.

Amnesty International, Cuban exiles and the U.S. government have appealed to the United Nations and to Cuban leader Fidel Castro to spare the men's lives.

Cuban authorities testified during a brief trial in Havana that the men admitted they planned to blow up theatres and factories and seize radio stations.

The Miami Herald said the men testified that the expedition was originally planned to include

22 heavily armed men and to spread to at least three Cuban cities. According to this account, the plan collapsed amid bickering among the organisers.

The State Department deplored the convictions and sentencing Monday, saying the appeared to be "a verdict reached in haste and a sentence disproportionate to the crime."

The White House Tuesday called on Cuba to reverse its decision to execute the three Cuban-born men from Miami convicted on terrorism charges, saying they should be spared out of concern for life.

"We hope that the Cuban government, out of concern for human life, will reconsider this decision to execute them," White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said.

Mr. Fitzwater said the United States was formally contacting the Cuban interest section in Washington to express its concern.

Meanwhile the State Department said Tuesday it would welcome an end to Cuban support for revolutionary movements in other countries.

The comment by spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler was prompted by a statement from Mr. Castro that Cuba will concentrate on resolving domestic problems after years of supporting leftist movements elsewhere.

Ms. Tutwiler said that if press accounts of Mr. Castro's remarks are true, "we would welcome such a change in Cuban policy."

Bush begins 'aggressive' campaign in New Hampshire

WASHINGTON (AP) — President George Bush plans to discuss the future of the base as well as the region's overall economy. Pesse, which Mr. Bush has used frequently for his trips to his vacation home in Kennebunkport, Maine, now serves as a state Air National Guard field.

Mr. Bush's trip also included visits to plants in Dover and Rochester, a visit to an insurance company office and a Rotary Club dinner in Portsmouth.

It was Mr. Bush's third visit to the state as president. His campaign officials in New Hampshire have said they expect him to visit two more times before the primary.

Mr. Buchanan, campaigning Tuesday in Concord, signed a pledge against raising taxes and challenged Mr. Bush to do the same.

Maybe we can get the first lady, Barbara, to co-sign it and make sure this time it sticks," he added.

Republican officials say many party voters in New Hampshire are still upset with Mr. Bush's abandonment of his 1988 "no new taxes" pledge. Mr. Buchanan has claimed that the 1990 budget deal that raised taxes and had Mr. Bush's endorsement contributed to the recession.

Mr. Fitzwater said that during the visit, the president would discuss taxes and the economic

growth package he will propose in his Jan. 28 State of the Union address, which is expected to include a number of proposed tax breaks.

Mr. Bush also wants to attack Mr. Buchanan's "America first" slogan, Mr. Fitzwater said. "Mr. Buchanan stands for isolationism and protectionism. He preaches that philosophy. We think that is wrong, and that it is not helpful to the nation or to New Hampshire."

Although few expect Mr. Buchanan to beat Mr. Bush, a strong showing by him in the Republican primary could embarrass the president and throw his campaign off stride.

Meanwhile, Mr. Bush fared badly Wednesday in a major bipartisan poll that found only 35 per cent of those surveyed want him re-elected.

Released as Mr. Bush headed to campaign in the critical primary state of New Hampshire, the joint survey by Republican and Democratic polling organisations revealed a big drop in Mr. Bush's rating since a similar poll last year.

In June, four months after Mr. Bush's record high 91 per cent popularity rating following the U.S.-led Gulf war victory, the first bipartisan "battleground 1992" poll said Mr. Bush was almost unbeatable against a

Democratic challenger.

That poll reported that 52 per cent of people said Mr. Bush deserved re-election while 28 per cent preferred someone else.

However a Dec. 11-13 survey of 1,000 registered voters showed only 35 per cent said Mr. Bush deserved re-election while 46 per cent wanted someone else. Nineteen per cent were unsure.

"This poll should be a wake-up call to the White House," said Republican pollster Ed Goetz. "Bush and the Republican Party must, for the first time, seriously face the fact that victory in November is not guaranteed."

The poll, which had a margin of error of 3.1 percentage points, is the latest of several surveys to show Mr. Bush's popularity declining amid anger about the stagnant U.S. economy.

Mr. Bush Tuesday named a new chief of lobbyist to deal with Congress, in a staff shakeup as the White House gears up for the rigours of a re-election campaign.

Mr. Bush named Nicholas Calio to head his Legislative Affairs Office. Mr. Calio, currently as Washington consultant, had served as the head of Mr. Bush's lobbying efforts with the House of Representatives during the first years of the administration.

Mr. Calio replaces Frederick McClure, who recently resigned to return to Texas.

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